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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should the NMC
board reconsider
and reinstate Agnes
McPhetres as a
regent?

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to cast your vote.

I N S I D E



Innocent Detainees

Many detainees locked up at Guantanamo were innocent men swept up by U.S. forces, a former Bush administration official said.

NATION...Page 10



Plane Crash

A small army plane slammed into an apartment building in an upscale neighborhood of Ecuador.

WORLD...Page 11



Rising Star

Just how far is Filipina singer Charice Pempengco headed?

MAHARLIKA...Page 15

'2 sets of Marpi remains belong to WWII era' **PAGE 2**
Thieves steal power lines in Dandan, Chalan Kiya. **PAGE 3**

EPA: NMI's toxic releases second lowest nationwide

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI ranks second lowest among the 56 U.S. states and territories in total toxic chemical releases, according to the 2007 nationwide toxics release inventory data released yesterday by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

American Samoa reported the least amount of toxic releases, totaling only 4.8 pounds, from Star-Kist Samoa.

The CNMI came in second lowest with 6,448 lbs of toxic chemicals released into the air, land and water in 2007.

These toxic releases came from Hawaiian Rock Products Saipan, Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc./Saipan Aviation Terminal, and Mobil Oil Mariana Islands

See EPA on Page 4



FUNDRAISING

Students, parents and other members of the community flock to the Saipan Community School in Susupe yesterday for a book sale initiated by the school's seventh graders to raise funds for a locker.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

More seniors to join military after high school

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

Barely three months before graduation, nearly a hundred senior students from the three biggest public high schools on island have already made up their minds to join the U.S. military for

the additional income and to be more independent and reliant.

Based on a survey conducted by the Northern Marianas College during its two-day Start Smart seminar that ended yesterday, a total of 98 graduating students said they plan to join the military. This is 24 percent of the total num-

ber of respondents.

Leo Pangelinan, NMC program manager for the College Access Challenge Project, disclosed that 61 of them are from Marianas High School while 37 are seniors from Kagman High and Saipan Southern High.

The poll, which had about 400 student

See MORE on Page 4

Govt vet clinic raises animal vaccination fee

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The government-run veterinarian clinic in As Perdido has increased the animal vaccination fee by \$1—or from \$5 to \$6—according to Lands and Natural Resources Secretary Dr. Ignacio Dela Cruz.

Dela Cruz, who is also the only government veterinarian in the CNMI, said the minimal fee increase is a result of the increased cost of animal vaccines.

The clinic also increased the price of heartworm preventive medicine by \$1 to \$2. "The prices keep coming up," Dela Cruz told *Saipan Tribune*.

Despite the fee increase, the fees charged at the government veterinary clinic are still very low compared to private practices.

But the charge for treatment of dog skin disease of up to \$5 per visit remains the same.

The DLNR veterinary clinic opens

See GOVT on Page 4

3 men fall in 'ice' bust

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Police arrested on Thursday three men who were allegedly engaged in selling crystal methamphetamine or "ice" on Saipan.

Eddie M. Fleming, 51; Benedicto R. Lizama, 57; and Juan Diego C. Matagolai, 29, were apprehended for trafficking of a controlled substance and illegal possession of a controlled substance.

The three were brought to the Superior Court yesterday afternoon for a bail hearing.

Associate Judge Perry B. Inos imposed a \$3,000 cash bail plus \$27,000 unsecured bond each for the temporary release of Fleming and Matagolai. Inos imposed a \$1,000 cash bail plus \$20,000 unsecured bond for the

See 3 MEN on Page 4



Inos



Local

Marpi remains belong to WWII era

Detectives have stopped investigation into the two sets of human remains recovered in Marpi after determining that the bones belong to persons who possibly died during World War II.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogomoro said detectives forwarded the case to the Historic Preservation Office.

Ogomoro said World War II ammunitions were discovered next to the bones.

Ogomoro said the human bones were found at the Marpi Homestead during site clearing last Wednesday.

She said while construction workers were unearthing the ground with a bulldozer when they found the skeletal remains of the two individuals.

All-Hazard Management Professionals and DPS Explosive Response Team members were sent to the area to monitor the construction excavation to check for unexploded ordnance and other hazardous materials.

Police Officer Jason Tarkong on Wednesday disclosed that human bones were found in Marpi area and that detectives responded to the area.

At the time, although detectives were still looking into the remains, Tarkong hinted that the human bones possibly belong to the World War II era. *(Ferdie de la Torre)*

Firm: Govt should not set rate for private ambulances

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

The first and only private ambulance firm in the CNMI lauds a proposal to regulate private ambulances to ensure accountability and compliance with standards of care and operations but it says the government should not "determine, fix and regulate rates" for these companies.

St. Michael's Medical Response said the government should not interfere with the dynamics of the free market and allow private sector enterprise to thrive on competition and demand.

"To the extent that the government does not 'determine' rates especially in the private sector health care industry; that the government should not treat private ambulance companies any different," said Joseph C. Santos, president and co-owner of St. Michael's Medical Response.

chael's Medical Response.

Santos also raised concern about a "clear conflict of interest between the issuance of certificates by the same person regulating the industry."

House Bill 16-111, introduced by Rep. Ralph DLG. Torres, R-Saipan, gives the head of the Office of Emergency and Medical Services the authority to issue, amend, transfer and revoke certificates of necessity.

Santos said there is a reason why the hospital administrator at the Commonwealth Health Center is not authorized to license physicians to work at the government hospital because of the inherent possibility that the administrator may be biased into issuing a license to a physician that may not necessarily meet the minimum criteria to work as a physician, as a way to cut corners or to favor the employment of a physician

that is familiar to the administrator.

"Similarly, the director of EMS may be biased into issuing a certificate to a company that may not be qualified to transport sick and critically ill patients," Santos said in a letter to Rep. Ray N. Yumul.

The Saint Michael's Medical Response president said this conflict of interest and possible bias can easily be mitigated or avoided completely if the licensing of private ambulance companies be handled and issued by a third party such as the Medical Professional Licensing Board.

H.B. 16-111, which also seeks to lessen the load of the Department of Public Safety in responding to non-emergency calls, is ready to be discussed in the House of Representatives after members adopted the standing committee report.

Santos said the reporting of financial information of the company to the Office of EMS and the

requirement of submitting patient care reports to the same office may violate federal regulations that protect the privacy of patient medical information.

"Again, I fully support legislation that aims at regulating the private ambulance industry in the CNMI but I strongly feel that H.B. 16-111 contains provisions that will adversely affect my company but more importantly, affect the direct patient care that we currently provide to this community," Santos added.

Saint Michael's Medical Response started operations in June 2008 after securing a loan from the Pacific Island Development Bank that helped with the purchase of equipment as well as working capital. All its current employees are residents. The company can be reached at 483-7667 or via email at smmr@pticom.com.

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OIA and Commerce to build GDP database for territories

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The Office of Insular Affairs of the Department of the Interior has signed an agreement with the Bureau of Economic Analysis of the U.S. Department of Commerce to assist the U.S. island territories in developing and producing annual gross domestic product, GDP, statistics for the islands.

Under the agreement, called Statistical Improvement Program, the Office of Insular Affairs will provide about \$1.6 million over 18 months during which the Bureau of Economic Analysis will develop GDP data for American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands and train territorial economists and statisticians.

This bureau calculates and reports the GDP of the United States, the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Currently, however, the GDP of the four U.S. island territories is not included in the national GDP which the Commerce Department prepares. The absence of this critical information prevents the Federal Government and the territorial governments from knowing the value of the territorial economic output, how that output evolves over time and how that evolution affects the living standards of these U.S. citizens and nationals.

"Working with our office at Interior and island government staffs, the Commerce bureau will produce GDP estimates for the four territories within a year of the official launch of the program this summer," said Nikolao Pula, acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Insular Affairs. "The Commerce Department will also train territorial staff in the methodol-

ogy and procedures of calculating and reporting territorial GDP data."

The goal is to ensure uniformity of standards and procedures, so that all four territories will produce GDP data that will be consistent with the Bureau's standards. As the Federal Government's authority on GDP methodology and statistics for the United States, the Bureau of Economic Analysis is the final arbiter of macroeconomic accounting, analysis and reporting.

"Interior's Office of Insular Affairs has made this commitment so that territorial governments can upgrade their institutional capacities to produce current and complete economic information that will enable the territories and Federal agencies to make informed decisions," Pula explained, "we have communicated with the four governors and are seeking their cooperation to make this program a success."

Senior Commerce staff working on the project include: Brent Moulton, associate director, National Income Accounts Directorate; Brian Moyer, associate director, Industry Accounts Directorate; Carole Moylan, chief of the National Income and Wealth Division; and Robert Kornfeld, deputy chief, National Income and Wealth Division.

Office of Insular Affairs economist Wali Osman and his counterpart at the Bureau of Economic Analysis, Robert Kornfeld, are the lead officials for implementing the program.

For more information on the Office of Insular Affairs, visit www.doi.gov/oia. (OIA)

ON THE NET

www.doi.gov/oia

Bill seeks shorter quarantine time for pets entering CNMI

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Rep. Rosemond Santos has introduced legislation that would allow for shorter periods of quarantine for pets entering the CNMI.

Under House Bill 16-233, pets that have received a properly implanted microchip and a titer against rabies may spend less than the required 120 days in quarantine. If 120 or more days have passed since the blood has arrived at the laboratory, and if all other requirements have been met, the animal must complete the CNMI quarantine program of five days or less and a physical examination by a veterinarian approved by the Chief of Animal and Health Industry.

The program requires some pre-approval requirements, however, including the proper vacci-

nations, microchip and blood test results, among other things.

The legislation notes that a pet passport scheme was created in the United Kingdom so pets would not need to undergo the usual six-month quarantine period to protect against rabies.

"Through this scheme, pets are able to travel freely and easily between member countries of the European Union and certain non-European Union countries which have qualified under the scheme, provided that they satisfy the health and safety requirements, particularly with regards to rabies vaccinations and follow the applicable procedure," the bill stated.

Hawaii and Guam, like the CNMI are rabies-free, and have developed similar programs to make traveling with pets easier by establishing procedures for shorter periods of quarantine, according to the legislation.

Thieves steal power lines in Dandan, Chalan Kiya

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Copper wire thieves struck at two houses in Dandan and Chalan Kiya on the same day last week, stealing a combined 165 feet of power lines, according to the Department of Public Safety yesterday.

DPS spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said 100 feet of electric power drop line was stolen from Dandan, while 65 feet of live copper wire was taken in Chalan Kiya.

Ogumoro said the incidents happened Sunday morning.

She did not say why details were released to the media only yesterday.

The DPS spokesperson said the Dandan case was reported by a caller to DPS at 10:03am.

Ogumoro said preliminary investigation showed that a technician went to the residence to install new air-conditioners when he noticed that there was no power connected to the house.

The technician then called the owner of the house. Police officers and Commonwealth Utilities Corp. personnel were also called to the scene.

With respect to the Chalan Kiya case, a caller reported the incident to DPS at 10:54am.

Ogumoro said preliminary investigation indicated that responding police officers noticed a drop line hanging about three feet above the ground from a power pole.

CUC personnel also responded to the unoccupied house. Police secured the premises of the house as well as the dangling drop line.

Ogumoro said the two cases are now being followed up.

"DPS investigators are requesting the assistance of com-

munity members to please call the DPS Criminal Investigation Division at 664-9050 or Crime Stoppers Program if they have information regarding these crimes or any other copper wire theft cases," she added.

Copper wire thieves on Saipan were very active in 2006 and 2007.

Superior Court associate judge David A. Wiseman described the crime as "reckless and senseless criminal activities" in sentencing a convicted copper wire thief in January 2008.

Wiseman said substantial prison penalties await copper wire thieves in his court.

The judge noted that when someone dismantles copper wire from a building, residence or a public way or utility, the magnitude of the repercussions from such act is widespread.

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Comment period extended for MIRC draft EIS/OEIS

SANTA RITA, Guam—The U.S. Defense Representative Guam, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and Republic of Palau (U.S. Defense Representative) is extending the public comment period for the Mariana Islands Range Complex Environmental Impact Statement/Overseas Environmental Impact Statement to March 31, 2009, to allow for additional public input.

This special allowance within this National Environmental Policy Act process was made due to public comments received. The extension is not required by NEPA but was requested and granted to ensure the public has ample opportunity to comment.

Global defense technology is constantly advancing and changing, and the U.S. military must adjust its ability to fulfill new training and testing require-

ments. To fulfill new requirements, the U.S. Defense Representative has proposed to upgrade and modernize the capabilities of the MIRC. The Navy has trained and conducted research, development, testing and evaluation in the MIRC for many years. The MIRC EIS/OEIS is a comprehensive analysis of the environmental impacts of current and potential Navy training and RDT&E activities in the Marianas.

Completion of the MIRC EIS/OEIS will help the Navy continue to use the Mariana Islands ranges and to increase those activities as needed for the nation's security while we maintain our stewardship of the environment. This is one of a dozen environmental impact statements the Navy is preparing for its major range complexes, which include Hawaii, Southern California, the Pacific Northwest and the East Coast. These efforts are

part of a long-term program to ensure the Navy has the training ranges it needs to provide combat-capable forces ready to deploy worldwide in America's defense

Submit comments

Public hearings for the MIRC Draft EIS/OEIS were publicized and held in February 2009. Written comments may be submitted to the address below or via the project website or e-mail. All written comments must be received by March 31, 2009, to ensure they become part of the official record. All timely comments will be responded to in the Final EIS/OEIS.

*Mariana Islands Range Complex EIS
258 Makalapa Drive, Suite 100
Attn: EV2
Pearl Harbor, HI 96860-3134*

E-mail: marianas.tap.eis@navy.mil

Web site: www.MarianasRange-ComplexEIS.com

For more information

The MIRC Draft EIS/OEIS document and additional project information can be found on the website (www.MarianasRangeComplexEIS.com) and at the following locations:

GUAM

University of Guam
Robert F. Kennedy Memorial Library
Government Documents Room
(671) 735-2321
Nieves M. Flores Memorial Library

671) 475-4753

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Tinian
(670) 433-0504

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SAIPAN

Joeten-Kiyu Public Library
Saipan
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

NMC 2009 graduation candidates meeting

Spring 2009 graduation candidates of the Northern Marianas College are invited to attend the Graduation Committee Meeting scheduled for March 24, 2009, at room A-9 on the NMC campus at 2pm.

The meeting will feature updates on graduation, as well as a discussion on the commencement theme, choices for the keynote speaker, plans for the commencement banquet and other aspects of the graduation. For more information, please contact Jack Kiyoshi, Jr. at 234-5498 ext. 1021, or jackk@nmcnet.edu. All students preparing to graduate in May 2009 are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting. (PR)

Jury selections cancelled

This is to inform all prospective jurors for panels "ES" that the jury selections scheduled for March 23, 2009 at 8:30am in Courtroom 205A are hereby cancelled until further notice. For further information, contact Dora SN. Decena, jury coordinator, or Cecilia R. Sa-

blan, deputy clerk, at telephone number 236-9765. (PR)

Quarterly tax return deadline

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to remind all CNMI residents that the 2009 1st Quarter deadline for filing the quarterly tax returns is Thursday, April 30, 2009. The Division of Revenue and Taxation will be open from 7:30am to 4:30pm on Thursday, April 30, 2009. The office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation is located at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Center. For more information, call 664-1000, 664-1043 Compliance Branch, or 664-1066 Collection Branch. (PR)

Income tax return deadline

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI residents that the deadline for filing of the 2008 individual Income Tax Return is Wednesday, April 15, 2009, at the office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Center. Deadline hours

for April 15, 2009 are from 7:30am to 4:30pm. (PR)

Saipan Southern PTA meeting

To all parents and legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School: There will be a PTA meeting on Wednesday, March 25, 2009, at 6pm in the cafeteria. (PR)

Marianas High School schedule

March 24 No classes (Commonwealth Covenant Day)
April 6-7th Quarter Final Exams
April 8 4th Quarter begins
April 9-13 Easter break
April 27- May 1 SAT10 Tests (Grade 9-11)
May 4-15 Advanced Placement Exams
May 18-22 PSS SBA Tests
May 25 No classes (Memorial Day)
June 11 Graduation Ceremony
June 15 End of 4th Quarter

For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. (PR)

temporary liberty of Lizama.

The judge set the preliminary hearing in all cases for March 27 at 9am.

Assistant attorney general William Downer represented the government at the hearing.

Police Officer Norman S. Rasiang stated in his report that an undercover police officer and a "cooperating source" managed to purchase \$200 worth of "ice" from Fleming on Feb. 12.

Rasiang said the operation was conducted by members of the DPS Narcotics Unit, with the assistance of the DPS Criminal Investigation Division.

Detective Steven A. Castro stated in his report that the same teams of officers used a "cooperating source" to purchase \$200 worth of "ice" from

GOVT

From Page 1

only twice a month; the most recent one was on Wednesday. The number of clients is 15 to 30 per clinic day.

Residents who want to know the next schedule for the veterinary clinic should call 234-6169 or 234-6180 and

Lizama on Feb. 19.

Castro said the meeting place between the "cooperating source" and Lizama was at a poker arcade in Kagman, but the defendant handed over the "ice" in San Vicente.

With respect to Matagolai, Police Officer Raymond Camacho stated in his report that an undercover police officer and a "cooperating source" were able to buy \$200 worth of "ice" from Matagolai on Jan. 22.

Officer Camacho said the "ice" deal was done inside a poker establishment in Dandan.

Camacho said the target in that operation was another person, but it was Matagolai who showed up and handed over the "ice."

The other suspect was not arrested yet.

Detectives served the arrest warrant on Fleming, Lizama, and Matagolai on Thursday.

look for Ray Ngeskebei.

The lone government veterinarian said it is important for pet owners to bring their pets because a lot of animal diseases like hookworms and roundworms can infect people, especially toddlers.

"It's rare that it happens but visiting a veterinary clinic is a preventive measure and to make sure animals are healthy," Dela Cruz added.

MORE

From Page 1

respondents, also showed a total of 189 students who want to further their studies at NMC, a majority of whom have already applied for the Fall 2010 semester.

"It looks like going to the military is the second top choice of our seniors of today," he told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

He admitted this is a slight cause of concern for the college, which encourages all senior students to pursue college after high school.

However, with the present economic situation, the students' decision is understandable, Pangelinan said.

"For many students, college probably would be the best choice after high school...but at the same time, we understand the reality and decisions made to first join the military is understandable. With the pressure they feel from their families to bring in more income, the military seems to be the quickest and most viable option for them," he said.

Pangelinan said the result was also due to the amount of resources the military has poured into its recruitment efforts, not only on the island but the entire Pacific region.

"There's an intensive recruitment and admittedly, they're offering financial aids and assistance for eligible and deserving students," he said.

Of the nearly 200 students from

Kagman and Saipan Southern High who participated in the seminar, 57 said they are going to the University of Guam; 22 will go to the University of Hawaii; and a few plan to take courses from international schools abroad.

The survey results also indicated that 16 seniors will immediately seek employment after graduation while 4 students say they will take a vacation.

To encourage more seniors to enroll at the college in the Fall semester, Pangelinan said NMC will immediately follow up on the students' applications and processing.

Yesterday, NMC presented participants with various financial assistance programs they can access in going to NMC.

A senior ROTC cadet also spoke to the crowd.

'22% join military in SY'08'

Based on Public School System records for school year 2007-2008, about 21 percent or 131 public school seniors joined the U.S. military upon graduation, while 44 percent opted to go to college. There were 595 graduates in the last school year.

The same records showed that 16 percent of the graduates immediately sought employment while 21 percent were undecided.

At MHS, *Saipan Tribune* learned that 106 graduates enrolled in college; 37 joined the military.

At Saipan Southern High, 81 en-

rolled in college and 53 joined the military, while Kagman High recorded 25 who enrolled in college and 23 joined the military.

At Tinian High School, 11 joined the military; Rota High School had six.

Pangelinan said that based on workshop's "good turnout," the college is projecting an increase in its enrollment in Fall 2010.

According to Tee Abraham, dean of Community Management Services, the college usually takes in 20 percent of the total high school graduates on the island.

NMC officials said that for NMC Spring 2009 enrollment, 151 are new students; it recorded 135 new students in 2008.

EPA

From Page 1

Inc./Saipan Terminal.

"The Toxic Release Inventory program arms communities with powerful information. The inventory is a tremendous tool to help protect public health and the environment. Safe communities depend on well-informed citizens," Laura Yoshii, acting USEPA administrator for the Pacific Southwest region, said in a statement.

Compared to the previous year, the CNMI's toxic releases dropped by 5 percent in 2007.

Contributing to this decline were the lack of any releases to the water or to underground injection, a less than 1 lb increase in land releases, and an 11 percent or 576 lbs drop in air releases. Shell Marianas did not report to the inventory this year, causing a decrease in releases, said the USEPA. CNMI Division of Environmental Quality director Frank Rabauliman could not be reached for comment yesterday.

Guam ranked fourth lowest with 250,236 lbs in total toxic releases.

In a separate statement, the EPA said Guam's toxic releases increased by 21 percent compared to 2006. The largest increase of 59 percent was of water releases. This 45,000-lb increase in chemical releases to water was reported by the U.S. Navy COMNAV MARIANAS Guam Main Base at Apra Harbor.

The USEPA's Toxics Release Inventory, commonly referred to as TRI, is one of the USEPA's largest publicly available databases, arming communi-

ties with valuable information on more than 650 toxic chemicals released by various industries.

The chemical information in the inventory is calculated by industrial facilities and reported to the USEPA as required by law.

Annual Toxic Release Inventory reporting began in 1987, providing information on annual toxic chemical releases reported by certain industrial and federal facilities. The TRI does not include data on toxic emissions from cars and trucks, nor from the ma-

jority of non-industrial sources, such as agriculture.

In 2000, the inventory expanded to include persistent bioaccumulative and toxic chemicals, or PBTs, at ranges from 0.1 grams to 100 pounds. PBT pollutants are toxic chemicals that remain in the environment and food chain, posing risks to human health and ecosystems

On a national level, there was a 5 percent decrease in total disposal or other releases into the environment nationwide from 2006 to 2007.

Island Snapshots



MVA RECOGNITION

Katsuaki Kobayashi, president of Pacific Micronesia Tours and chairman of Japan Marianas Tourism Club, was recognized by Marianas Visitors Authority on March 12, 2009, on what is expected to be his last official trip to the CNMI before his retirement. Presenting a plaque of appreciation from the MVA at a luncheon in his honor are, from left, managing director Perry Tenorio, board member Yoichi Matsumura, board chair Jerry Tan, Kobayashi, board vice chair Marian Aldan-Pierce, board member Kazusuke Fukuju and board member B.K. Park. Kobayashi, who also received a replica of an indigenous Chamorro octopus trap, has been instrumental in attracting Japanese tourists to the Northern Mariana Islands through his leadership roles.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



DONATION TO KARIDAT

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fr. Manuel Corcuera, Vicar General of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa, far right, joins Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela, second from right, and Angie V. Deleon Guerrero, director of Karidat Social Services, left, as Tudela presents to Karidat donated gifts from Seisha High School Cultural and Sports Exchange Program from Yokohama, Japan, during their recent trip to Saipan last month. The gifts consist of used and new clothing and few pairs of shoes.

MTEC GETS DONATION

Marianas Tourism Education Council chair Ed Cho, center left, receives a \$125 donation on March 19, 2009, from TAGA Inc. official Wolf Mojica. TAGA Inc. donated \$5 for every 2008 XTERRA trail run participant in support of MTEC's tourism education projects. The 2009 XTERRA Championship (Saipan) will be held on April 18, 2009. Pictured from left are MTEC vice chair Vicky Benavente, Marianas Visitors Authority community project manager Martin Duenas, MTEC member Larry Lee, Cho, Mojica, TAGA Inc. founder JM Guerrero, MVA managing director Perry Tenorio, and TAGA Inc. member and MVA board member Yoichi Matsumura.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

BIRTHDAY WISH

Happy birthday to our Neni Girl "Jenisha Jo." We love you and may all your dreams come true. Wishing only the best for you. Happy 6th birthday! You rock!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy 14th birthday greetings go out to Janece Mae C. Salas. We love and miss you! Greetings come from Dad, Mom, John and the fambam back here on Saipan.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Happy birthday Mom! Thanks for all that you do! May your birthday be filled with hugs and kisses. We love you always!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings go out to Lathania Angui. We hope you enjoy your special day. Thank you for being the best mother in the world. We love you so much. Congratulations on your 4.0 GPA at NMC! From Loutricia, grandma Pat, grandpa Luis and the whole family. Similar greetings also come from Louie and LJ Boy Reyes and the rest of the fambams!

Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Condom sense

The late New York senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan once said, "Everyone is entitled to his own opinion but not his own facts." This holds true even for the pope.

While on a flight to Cameroon on Tuesday to begin a weeklong journey through Africa, Pope Benedict XVI said, "You can't resolve (the AIDS epidemic) with the distribution of condoms. On the contrary, it increases the problem." In a perfect world, people would abstain from having sex until they were married or would be monogamous in committed relationships. But the world isn't perfect — and neither is Pope Benedict's pronouncement on the effectiveness of condoms in the battle against HIV/AIDS. The evidence says so.

Are condoms foolproof protection against infection by HIV, which causes AIDS? No. Sometimes they break, and sometimes people put them on incorrectly. Still, doctors on the front lines of the fight against the AIDS epidemic established long ago that the use of condoms greatly diminishes the transmission of HIV, the cause of a disease that has no cure. That the pope chose to question the value of condoms in fighting the nearly 28-year-old scourge while heading to the continent whose people are most affected by it is troubling. According to UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, sub-Saharan Africa is the epidemic's center, with 67 percent of the world's 32.9 million people with HIV and with 75 percent of all AIDS deaths. Heterosexual intercourse is the "driving force" of the epidemic.

The pope's comment was so alarming that a spokesman for the French Foreign Ministry said, "We consider that these statements endanger public health policies and the imperative to protect human life." What the pontiff said was especially discordant to us coming a day after the District of Columbia's HIV/AIDS Administration released its startling survey showing that 3 percent of this city's residents are living with HIV/AIDS. UNAIDS and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention define a "severe" epidemic in a specific area as at least 1 percent of the population being infected. To halt the march of HIV/AIDS, those who have the infection must be treated. Those who do not have it need all the information and tools possible to remain HIV-negative. The pope's denunciation of condoms is of no help.

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BRACKINS RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH
3/09

Obama's no Socialist. I should know.

By BILLY WHARTON
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

It took a massive global financial crisis, a failed military adventure and a popular repudiation of the Republican Party to make my national television debut possible. After 15 years of socialist political organizing—everything from licking envelopes and handing out leaflets to the more romantic task of speaking at street demonstrations—I found myself in the midtown Manhattan studio of the Fox Business Network on a cold February evening. Who ever thought that being the editor of the Socialist magazine, circulation 3,000, would launch me on a cable news career?

The media whirlwind began in October with a call from a New York Times writer. He wanted a tour of the Socialist Party USA's national office. Although he was more interested in how much paper we used in our "socialist cubby hole" than in our politics, our media profile exploded. Next up, a pleasant interview by Swedish National Radio. Then Brian Moore, our 2008 presidential candidate, sparred with Stephen Colbert. Even the Wall Street Journal wanted a socialist to quote after the first bailout bill failed last fall. Traffic to our Web site multiplied, e-mail inquiries increased and meetings with potential recruits to the Socialist Party yielded more new members than ever before. Socialism—an idea with a long history—suddenly seemed to have a bright future in 21st-century America.

Whom did we have to thank for this moment in the spotlight? Oddly enough, Republican politicians such as Mike Huckabee and John McCain had become our most effective promoters. During his campaign, the ever-desperate McCain, his hard-charging running mate Sarah Palin and even a plumber named Joe lined up to call Barack Obama a "socialist." Last month, Huckabee even exclaimed that, "The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics may be dead, but the Union of American Socialist Republics is being born."

We appreciated the newfound attention. But we also cringed as the debate took on the hysterical tone of a farcical McCarthyism. The question "Is Obama a socialist?" spread rapidly through a network of rightwing blogs, conservative television outlets and alarmist radio talk shows and quickly moved into the mainstream. "We Are All Socialists Now," declared a Newsweek cover last month. A New York Times reporter recently pinned Obama down with the question, "Are you a socialist, as some people have suggested?" The normally unflappable politician stumbled through a response so unconvincing that it required a follow-up call in which Obama claimed impeccable free market credentials.

All this speculation over whether our current president is a socialist led me into the sea of business suits, BlackBerrys and self-promoters

in the studio at Fox Business News. I quickly realized that the antagonistic anchor David Asman had little interest in exploring socialist ideas on bank nationalization. For Asman, nationalization was merely a code word for socialism. Using logic borrowed from the 1964 thriller "The Manchurian Candidate," he portrayed Obama as a secret socialist, so far undercover that not even he understood that his policies were de facto socialist. I was merely a cudgel to be wielded against the president—a physical embodiment of guilt by association.

The funny thing is, of course, that socialists know that Barack Obama is not one of us. Not only is he not a socialist, he may in fact not even be a liberal. Socialists understand him more as a hedge-fund Democrat—one of a generation of neoliberal politicians firmly committed to free-market policies.

The first clear indication that Obama is not, in fact, a socialist, is the way his administration is avoiding structural changes to the financial system. Nationalization is simply not in the playbook of Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner and his team. They favor costly, temporary measures that can easily be dismantled should the economy stabilize. Socialists support nationalization and see it as a means of creating a banking system that acts like a highly regulated public utility. The banks would then cease to be sinkholes for public funds or financial versions of casinos and would become essential to reenergizing productive sectors of the economy.

The same holds true for health care. A national health insurance system as embodied in the single-payer health plan reintroduced in legislation this year by Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., makes perfect sense to us. That bill would provide comprehensive coverage, offer a full range of choice of doctors and services and eliminate the primary cause of personal bankruptcy—health-care bills. Obama's plan would do the opposite. By mandating that every person be insured, ObamaCare would give private health insurance companies license to systematically underinsure policyholders while cashing in on the moral currency of universal coverage. If Obama is a socialist, then on health care, he's doing a fairly good job of concealing it.

Issues of war and peace further weaken the commander in chief's socialist credentials. Obama announced that all U.S. combat brigades will be removed from Iraq by August 2010, but he still intends to leave as many as 50,000 troops in Iraq and wishes to expand the war in Afghanistan and Pakistan. A socialist foreign policy would call for the immediate removal of all troops. It would seek to follow the proposal made recently by an Afghan parliamentarian, which called for the United States to send 30,000 scholars or engineers instead of more fighting forces.

Yet the president remains "the world's best salesman of social-

See OBAMA on next page

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

5 myths about pandemic panic

Winter is almost over, and it appears that we're going to make it through another flu season without a global disaster. That may seem like a miracle after the hysteria generated in recent years by SARS, avian flu and the World Health Organization's standing warning that it's "a matter of time" before the next influenza pandemic strikes. But the truth is that the threat is being hyped.

Infectious diseases are spreading faster than ever.

The World Health Organization made this claim in a 2007 report. But even before the advent of commercial air travel, diseases had no trouble moving from place to place. In the 1490s, syphilis rode Spanish ships across the Atlantic (whether from the New World to the Old or vice versa is subject to debate) in a matter of weeks, then made its way through Europe and Asia. In the 1820s, military and merchant ships carried cholera from India to the Middle East, Africa and Europe. At the end of World War I, the "Spanish flu" virus crossed the ocean on troop ships, ravaged the forces fighting in Europe and then spread around the world to produce the 1918 pandemic. The death toll topped 40 million.

In 2003, SARS showed that although air travel can introduce a disease to a new location, it won't necessarily cause the illness to spiral out of control. Because public officials quickly contained the few SARS outbreaks caused by infected people on planes, the 774 deaths were concentrated in China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Canada.

Tuberculosis is another airborne illness that can be controlled. Studies show that it's extremely unlikely for the disease to be transmitted in airplane cabins. (Remember the passenger with drug-resistant TB who traveled from Atlanta to Paris in 2007? No one else came down with it.) So germs do fly, but outbreaks don't go global that much more readily than they did before. And we can handle most of them by monitoring infectious people and distributing medicine quickly—precautions that have been in place for years and even centuries.

Thinking happy thoughts

Oh, no. Here comes another study about happiness. We can't seem to do enough of these paeans to cheerfulness. In the last few months alone, the *British Medical Journal* suggested that having a happy close friend boosts our own odds of being happy by 25 percent; the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* pointed to evidence that optimism and pessimism are genetically determined; and the Web site happier.com, which, according to its mission statement, "measures, tracks and improves happiness," launched an iPhone application that allows users to keep a mobile "gratitude journal" (just don't be grateful while driving).

The latest installment comes in the form of the Gallup Healthways Well-Being Index, a huge poll (it used a random sample of 355,000 Americans) designed to measure people's daily well-being and describe its correlation to where they live and work. The survey revealed which U.S. states (and which congressional districts within those states) were the healthiest and happiest in six categories: life satisfaction, work quality, healthy behavior, physical health, emotional health and basic access to necessities such as food and shelter.

The big winner was Utah, followed by Hawaii, Wyoming, Colorado and Minnesota. The state with the worst sense of well-being was West Virginia. Michigan, Ohio, Mississippi and Kentucky filled out the list of the five worst states.

What are we to conclude from this? Well, let's see: Utah happens to have an unemployment rate of 4.6 percent, versus the national average of 7.6 percent (according to January numbers). West Virginia, for its part, has one of the weakest state economies in the country. As for the congressional districts, California's 14th, which includes the lush, plush Silicon Valley cities of Palo Alto and Mountain View,

To learn how to prevent a pandemic, look to the past.

We always seem to be preparing for the last war. But the worst calamities erupt precisely because they are unprecedented and unimaginable. When the Black Death arrived in Europe in the 1340s, wiping out at least a quarter of the population, the region had been plague-free for six centuries. In the 1830s and '40s, cholera, never before seen in the West, killed up to 1 percent of the populations of several British and American cities in a few weeks. The influenza of 1918 was unlike any before or since (see Myth No. 3). Then came yet another unheard-of illness: AIDS. Like those before it, the next killer will be one that we've never imagined — or prepared for.

We should brace ourselves for another Spanish flu.

Fortunately, we'll never see another flu outbreak of that sort. During World War I, the movement of troops and refugees — many of whom were too young to have acquired flu immunities during the epidemics of the 19th century—created a unique breeding ground for the virus and probably allowed more virulent strains to develop. New research also suggests that most of the deaths in 1918 and 1919 were caused by bacterial infections that roared through weakened respiratory systems. So if the disease came back today, antibiotics would save many of the infected. More probable than a reprise of the 1918 scenario are further outbreaks such as today's avian flu — which is far less dangerous because the virus spreads from animals to humans, not from person to person. Avian flu has killed millions of birds but has sickened only 411 people since 2003. Public health officials should spend more time preparing for the possible fallout from a widespread outbreak among animals rather than stoking panic about a new Spanish flu.

The annual flu season is nothing compared to a pandemic.

Preparedness warriors try to frighten people by using the word

By **PHILIP ALCABES**

Special to The Washington Post

Philip Alcabes is a professor of urban public health at Hunter College of the City University of New York and the author of the forthcoming Dread: How Fear and Fantasy Have Fueled Epidemics from the Black Death to Avian Flu.



"pandemic." But such strains of the influenza virus — new ones to which humans have not developed resistance — aren't necessarily more virulent than the ordinary ones we see each winter. Only two flu pandemics have occurred since 1918, one in 1957 and the other in 1968. In both cases, global mortality was a fraction of what it was in 1918. And in the United States, as a recent study showed, the number of deaths directly attributable to influenza during the two pandemics was no higher than during typical flu seasons.

There's no such thing as being too prepared.

Actually, we run the risk of doing more harm than good by overreacting to the threat of a pandemic. In 1976, swine flu, a strain of influenza similar to the one from 1918, was diagnosed in a small number of soldiers at Fort Dix, N.J., one of whom died. That prompted medical experts to warn that the United States faced a crisis reminiscent of the Spanish flu. President Ford authorized a mass inoculation program, and 45 million Americans — more than 20 percent of the population — were vaccinated.

But the plan crashed. A disorder called Guillain-Barre syndrome, which causes the immune system to attack the body's nerves, began appearing in patients who had received the flu shots. About 500 cases were linked to the vaccine; 32 of those people died. The federal government ended up settling wrongful death and damage claims for millions of dollars. But there was no swine flu epidemic, just a handful of cases.

By **MEGHAN DAUM**

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Daum is an essayist and novelist in Los Angeles. E-mail Daum at mdaum@latimescolumnists.com.



I learned that all but two of the anagrams were unsolvable and that the exercise was developed to help me "gain more control" of my "thinking styles" and "identify the adversity" I was experiencing.

In other words, I shouldn't have been so hard on myself for erroneously surmising that "godapoo" was almost an anagram for "dog poo." I then went back and retook the happiness test and scored a 70.

Of course, even if I were one of the few people who appear to be thriving in this economy—like oil company executives and, rather Dickensianly, shoe repairers (people are getting their shoes fixed rather than buying new ones)—I'd probably still get a middling score on that test. And that's not just because the well-being index ranked my congressional district 416th out of 435 (I attribute that entirely to the overcrowded parking lot at Trader Joe's). It's because ultimately my father was right.

If we believe the results of many of these studies, which suggest that life satisfaction is mostly a matter of perception, then happiness is an illusion. It also happens to be an illusion that can seem a lot more real when paired with cash. Now excuse me while I drop \$200 on an iPhone so I can start that mobile gratitude journal.

OBAMA

From Page 10

ism," according to Republican Sen. Jim DeMint, R, of South Carolina. DeMint encouraged supporters "to take to the streets to stop America's slide into socialism." Despite the fact that billions of dollars of public wealth are being transferred to private corporations, Huckabee still felt confident in proposing that "Lenin and Stalin would love" Obama's bank bailout plan.

Huckabee is clearly no socialist scholar, and I doubt that any of

Obama's policies will someday appear in the annals of socialist history. The president has, however, been assigned the unenviable task of salvaging a capitalist system intent on devouring itself. The question is whether he can do so without addressing the deep inequalities that have become fundamental features of American society. So, President Obama, what I want to know is this: Can you lend legitimacy to a society in which 5 percent of the population controls 85 percent of the wealth? Can you sell a health-care reform package that will only end up enriching a private health insurance industry? Will you continue to favor military spending over infrastructure development and social services?






My guess is that the president will avoid these questions, further confirming that he is not a socialist except, perhaps, in the imaginations of an odd assortment of conservatives. Yet as the unemployment lines grow longer, the food pantries emptier and health care scarcer, socialism may be poised for a comeback in America. The doors of our "socialist cubby-hole" are open to anyone, including Obama. I encourage him to stop by for one of our monthly membership meetings. Be sure to arrive early to get a seat—we're more popular than ever lately.

Billy Wharton is editor of the Socialist magazine. billyspnyc@yahoo.com.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

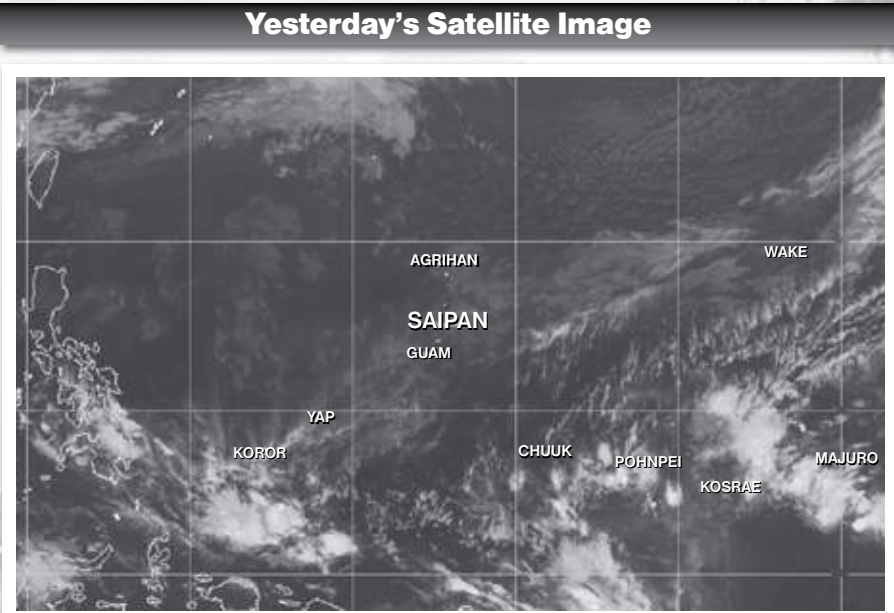
5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
				
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°	▲86° ▼76°

Micronesia		
Guam and Rota	Mostly Sunny	▲85 ▼74
Palau	Cloudy	▲88 ▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲86 ▼76
Chuuk	Rain	▲88 ▼77
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲86 ▼77
Kosrae	Showers	▲88 ▼76
Majuro	Showers	▲83 ▼78

Around The Globe		
Auckland	Partly Sunny	▲68 ▼56
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲66 ▼41
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲82 ▼72
Honolulu	Cloudy	▲76 ▼68
London	Partly Sunny	▲61 ▼37
Los Angeles	Mostly Cloudy	▲66 ▼52
Manila	Sunny	▲90 ▼75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲91 ▼69
Miami	Cloudy	▲78 ▼63
New York	Sunny	▲48 ▼36
Osaka	Mostly Sunny	▲64 ▼53
Paris	Mostly Sunny	▲49 ▼35
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲64 ▼57
Rome	Partly Sunny	▲48 ▼33
Salem	Mostly Cloudy	▲52 ▼33
San Francisco	Mostly Cloudy	▲60 ▼47
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲66 ▼50
Tokyo	Mostly Sunny	▲61 ▼52
Washington, DC	Sunny	▲53 ▼36

Tides		
Saipan Harbor		
5:27 AM Today	High Tide:	1.6 Feet
10:31 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
2:58 PM Today	High Tide:	1.5 Feet
10:39 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet



PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, FRIDAY, MARCH 20, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A surface circulation is centered near 25N170E. A cold front extends southwestward from the circulation to Wake Island at 19N166E to end at 17N165E. Cloudiness and scattered light showers are found within 100 miles of the cold front. A shear line runs southwestward from 23N166E to 12N144E. Scattered light showers are found along and up to 100 miles northwest of this boundary. This area includes the Marianas. A near-equatorial trough extends southeastward from 4N130E to 3N140E to end at EQ156E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are found within 100 miles of the trough axis from 132E to 138E. A surface trough west of Pohnpei runs from 2N156E to 7N156E. Convergent low-level winds east of the trough are generating scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms within 100 miles of a line from 6N154E to 6N163E to 9N163E. This area includes Pohnpei and Kosrae. Scattered trade-wind showers are found within 100 miles of a line from 5N166E to 3N173E and from 5N174E to 3N180.

Sunrise/Sunset			Moonrise/Moonset		
Today	6:21 AM	6:28 PM	Today	2:24 AM	1:53 PM
Sunday	6:20 AM	6:28 PM	Sunday	3:06 AM	2:44 PM
Monday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM	Monday	3:46 AM	3:34 PM
Tuesday	6:19 AM	6:28 PM	Tuesday	4:24 AM	4:24 PM
Wednesday	6:18 AM	6:29 PM	Wednesday	5:01 AM	5:14 PM

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 - BUSINESS Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
 - SAMUT SARI Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
 - TRAVELOGUE Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.
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 - COMMUNITY BRIEFS

- Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
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 - Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
 - For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.
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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF MARCH 12, 2009					
DEPARTURES			ARRIVALS		
Saipan-Rota			Rota-Saipan		
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm 1,7	CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am 5,6
Saipan-Guam			Guam-Saipan		
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am Daily	CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am 1,2,3,4,7
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am Daily	CO9598	2:30am	4:00am 5,6 via Rota
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm 1,7 via Rota	CO9596	7:00am	7:50am Daily
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm 2,3,4,5,6	CO9600	10:20am	11:10am Daily
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm Daily	CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm Daily	CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm Daily	CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm Daily
Saipan-Narita			Narita-Saipan		
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am Daily	NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm 2,3,4,5,6,7	NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1 2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm Daily	NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1 Daily
Guam-Narita			Narita-Guam		
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm Daily	NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm Daily	NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm Daily
Saipan-Osaka			Osaka-Saipan		
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am 1,4,6	OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1 3,5,7
Guam-Osaka			Osaka-Guam		
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm Daily	NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			Nagoya-Saipan		
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am Daily	NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1 Daily
Guam-Nagoya			Nagoya-Guam		
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm Daily	NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm Daily
Saipan-Incheon			Incheon-Saipan		
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am 1	OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm Daily
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am 2,3,4,5,6,7	OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1 7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am 1,4,6 via Osaka	OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1 3,5,7
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm Daily	OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1 1,2,3,4,5,6
Saipan-Busan			Busan-Saipan		
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am 1,4,5,7	OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1 3,4,6,7
Saipan-Shanghai			Shanghai-Saipan		
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am 2,6	FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1 1,5
Rota-Guam			Guam-Rota		
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm 1,7	CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am 5,6
Guam-Palau			Palau-Guam		
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm 1,7	CO 954	2:30am	5:25am 1,2
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm 3,5	CO 892	2:35am	5:30am 4,6
Palau-Manila			Manila-Palau		
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm 3,5	CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1 3,5
Guam-Manila			Manila-Guam		
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm 3,5 via Koror	CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1 3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm Daily	CO 934	11:10pm	4:05am+1 Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am 1,2,4,6,7	PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1 1,3,5,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			Manila-Nagoya		
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm Daily	NW 72	6:30am	11:05am Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			Hongkong-Incheon		
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm Daily	OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm Daily	OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am 1,4,6
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm 5,7	OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm Daily
Narita-Manila			Manila-Narita		
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm Daily	NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency	Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota				FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily	FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily	FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily	FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily	Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
Guam-Rota				FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily	FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
Rota-Saipan				FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily	FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
Saipan-Rota				FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily	FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
Rota-Guam				FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily	FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian				FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily	FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily	FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily	FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily	FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily				
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily				



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

Schedule of Religious Services														
CATHOLIC														
Mt. Carmel Cathedral Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm														
Korean Center Sunday: 10:30am Wednesday: 10am Thursday-Friday: 8pm Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm														
Kristo Rai Parish Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am Monday- Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6am and 6pm Saturday: 6am and 6pm														
Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish Wednesday Mass: 6pm First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm Saturday Mass: 6pm Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am														
Saint Jude Parish Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm														
San Antonio Parish Sunday: 6am and 8am Tuesday and Friday: 6pm														
San Francisco de Borja-Rota Sunday: 6am and 8am Monday-Saturday: 6am Wednesday: 6pm														
San Isidro-Rota Sunday: 5am and 10am Monday-Wednesday: 7pm Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm														
San Jose (Oleai) Parish Sunday: 6am and 7:30am Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm														
San Roque Parish Sunday: 9am Wednesday: 6pm Saturday: 10:30am														
San Vicente Parish Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm Monday-Saturday: 6pm														
Santa Remedios Sunday: 7:30am Tuesday: 6pm Saturday: 10am-Baptism														
Santa Soledad Sunday: 7:30am														
PROTESTANT														
Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am Sunday School for Children: 10-11am Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm														
Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan Sunday School: 9am Sunday Morning Worship: 10am Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm														
Chinese Christian Church of Saipan Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm														
Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan Worship/Study Opportunities Adult Sunday School: 9am Youth Sunday School: 9am English Worship Service Sunday: 10am Sunday Service: 5:30pm Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm; Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm Mid-week Service: 7:30pm Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm														
Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan St. Paul's Episcopal Church Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am Place: Vicarage, Chalan Lallau, Call 235-0545 for directions														
Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan Worship Service: 9am GBI Classes: 4-6pm Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am Sunday: 7am Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm														
Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog) Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English) Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog) Sunday: 6:45am (English) Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)														
Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville Sunday Services 9:00 AM Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158 Pastor JJ Matsumoto														
Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation) Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal 8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)														
9:15am-Sunday School Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group 8:00pm-Prayer Meeting Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church) Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)														
Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan English Service: 9-11am, Sunday Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday														
Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan Sunday School: 8:20am Sunday Adult: 10am Sunday Adult: 11:30am Sunday Evening: 7:30pm Wednesday: 8pm														
Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan Sunday Worship Service: 10am-12noon Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)														
Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan English Worship Service: 9-10:30am Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm English Sunday School: 11am-12pm Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: English, 7pm-8pm Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm														
Missions Connection Ministry Every Sunday Celebrations: 10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog) Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm Youth Impact Friday: 7pm Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm														
Northern Marianas Christian Church Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided) Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620														
Saipan Bible Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30-10am Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm														
Saipan Christian Church Sunday: 7:30am-10am Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting) Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)														
Saipan Church of Christ Sunday Bible Class: 9am Sunday Worship: 10am Sunday Worship English: 6pm Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm														
Saipan Community Church (Sunday Services) Palau Service: 7:30am-9am English Service: 10am-11:30am Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm														
Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan (Saturday Church Services) Sabbath School Program: 9-10am Lesson Study: 10-10:40am Divine Service: 11-12pm Visitation: 3-4pm Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm Sundown Worship: 6-7pm														
First Baptist Church (Formerly Saipan Baptist Church) Afetna St., San Antonio Sunday <table><tr><td></td><td>9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>10am</td><td>Regular worship</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>6pm</td><td>worship</td></tr><tr><td>Wednesday</td><td>7pm</td><td>worship</td></tr></table> Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.				9am	Sunday school		10am	Regular worship		6pm	worship	Wednesday	7pm	worship
	9am	Sunday school												
	10am	Regular worship												
	6pm	worship												
Wednesday	7pm	worship												
Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center Phone 234-0209 New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches. Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi Service Times Sunday 10:00am Worship Service Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service Saturday 10:00am Evangelism														
Upper Room International Ministries Sunday 5:30 am-6:30 am Morning prayer <table><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>English service</td></tr><tr><td>7am-9am</td><td>Sunday school</td></tr><tr><td>10am-12noon</td><td>English service,</td></tr></table> Koblerville Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church Gualo Rai, Saipan			7am-9am	English service	7am-9am	Sunday school	10am-12noon	English service,						
7am-9am	English service													
7am-9am	Sunday school													
10am-12noon	English service,													
Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church Sunday School: 9:30am Sunday AM Worship:10:30am Sunday PM Worship:7:00am Wed Worship: 7:30pm Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S														



Elameto eyes suit vs CUC
Former Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Board Chairperson Rosario M. Elameto has protested her ouster as head of the policy-making body as she expressed concern that the action by some members may be unconstitutional. In a sign of growing infighting within the seven-man board, she asked the Attorney General's Office to bring the issue to court and seek a judgment on behalf of CUC and the government. Should the decision by the board to elect new officers be declared null and void, Ms. Elameto urged the governor to take actions, including their termination from the government-owned utility corporation, for breaching the laws and stepping the boundary of their duties.

Guerrero vows major revamp in utility firm
Newly elected Commonwealth Utilities Corp. Board Chair Jesus T. Guerrero yesterday vowed to institute major policy changes and revamp management in an effort to bridge its widening gap with the Legislature and the community. He also stressed that the decision to oust former Chairperson Rosario M. Elameto was made after a "thorough review" of applicable public laws and CUC regulations. "I want to make clear that this board will set the policy for the CUC, rather than the other way around," said Mr. Guerrero in a statement released after Ms. Elameto protested the board's action last week. (see related story)



Officials upbeat on benefits of new investment incentive law
Despite the weak rally of local businesses during the past three years, hope continues to spring eternal for the Northern Marianas economy. The Commonwealth Development Authority has started receiving inquiries and applications from foreign investors under the recently-enacted Investment Incentive Act of 2000. The inquiries are consistently coming in although crafting by CDA of the new law's implementing guidelines are still in the final stages, said House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial in an interview yesterday. Mr. Fitial said increased number of concrete applications for the establishment of new businesses in the CNMI are anticipated to pour in once the implementing regulations are put in place.

CUC: No money to pay CDA loans
Since its inception in 1985, the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation has not obtained a full cost recovery to repay the capital and accrued interest loaned by the Commonwealth Development Authority. In fact, the Department of the Interior has recommended three alternatives back in 1993 to make the utility corporation financially stable amid continued improvement programs, CUC Corporate Communication Special Advisor Pamela Mathis said. Under the evaluation and assessment report submitted by Kennedy Shaw of Louis Berger International, Inc., the financial situation of CUC requires immediate attention in terms of its cash flow, its lack of cost recovery and its inadequate financial records and budget.



Japan travel execs: 100K more visitors feasible
Top executives from the four leading travel agencies in Japan flew in yesterday to take part in a meeting of the Tourism Strategic Planning Task Force, where they expressed optimism that the plan to bring in an additional 100,000 visitors to the CNMI this year is attainable. DFS Saipan president Marian Aldan-Pierce identified the Japanese travel executives as Shigeru Murata and Minoru Yoshida, both representing travel agency HTM-Japan; Hiromi Tsuchiya, representing JalPak; Yoshinobu Onizawa, of PMT; and Katsumi Yajima, of R and C. "They flew in just to attend the meeting at the Aqua Resort Club and then left [yesterday] evening back to Japan," said Aldan-Pierce, who added that these officials came here to the Commonwealth at their own expense.

Immunity bill being ironed out
Faced with an undetermined number of illegal aliens in the Commonwealth, the Senate committee on Resources, Economic Development and Programs is looking into proposing a measure that would seek to grant immunity to illegal aliens who voluntarily present themselves. Saying the issue is actually an economic problem, Senate President Paul Manglona disclosed that the committee, chaired by Sen. Ricardo S. Atalig, is working on a bill somewhat similar to the Limited Immunity Act implemented a few years ago in the Commonwealth.

Business

House passes bill taxing AIG and other bonuses

WASHINGTON (AP)—Denouncing a "squandering of the people's money," lawmakers voted decisively Thursday to impose a 90 percent tax on millions of dollars in employee bonuses paid by troubled insurance giant AIG and other bailed-out companies. The House vote was 328-93. Similar legislation has been introduced in the Senate and President Barack Obama quickly signaled general support for the concept. "I look forward to receiving a final product that will serve as a strong signal to the executives who run these firms that such compensation will not be tolerated," the president said in a statement. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif, told colleagues, "We want our money back now for the taxpayers. It isn't that complicated." The outcome may not have been complicated. But the lopsided vote failed to reflect the contentious political battle that preceded it. Republicans took Democrats to task for rushing to tax AIG bonuses worth an estimated \$165 million after the majority party stripped from last month's economic stimulus bill a provision that could have banned such payouts. "This political circus that's going on here today with this bill is not getting to the bottom of the questions of who knew what and when did they know it," said House Republican Leader John Boehner of Ohio. He voted "no," but 85 fellow Republicans joined 243 Democrats in voting "yes." It was opposed by six Democrats and 87 Republicans. The bill would impose a 90 percent tax on bonuses given to employees with family incomes above \$250,000 at American International Group and other companies that have received at least \$5 billion in government bailout money. It would apply to any such bonuses issued since Dec. 31. The House vote, after just 40 minutes of debate, showed how quickly Congress can act when the political will is there. It was only this past weekend that the bailed-out insurance giant paid bonuses totaling \$165 million to employees, including traders in the Financial Products unit that nearly brought about AIG's collapse. AIG has received \$182.5 billion in federal bailout money and is now 80 percent government owned. Disclosure of the bonuses touched off a national firestorm that both the Obama administration and Congress have scurried to contain. In a statement issued by the White House late Thursday, Obama said the House vote "rightly reflects the outrage that so many feel over the lavish bonuses that AIG provided its employees at the expense of the taxpayers who have kept this failed company afloat."

13 firms receiving federal bailout owe back taxes

WASHINGTON (AP)—At least 13 firms receiving billions of dollars in bailout money owe a total of more than \$220 million in unpaid federal taxes, a key lawmaker said Thursday. Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., chairman of a House subcommittee overseeing the federal bailout, said two firms owe more than \$100 million apiece. "This is shameful. It is a disgrace," said Lewis. "We are going to get to the bottom of what is going on here." The House Ways and Means subcommittee on oversight discovered the unpaid taxes in a review of tax records from 23 of the firms receiving the most money, Lewis said as he opened a hearing on the issue. The committee said it could not legally release the names of the companies owing taxes. It said one recipient had almost \$113 million in unpaid federal income taxes from 2005 and 2006. A second recipient owed almost \$102 million dating to before 2004. Another was behind \$1.1 million in federal income taxes and \$223,000 in federal employment taxes. "If we looked at all 470 recipients, how much would they owe?" Lewis asked. Lewis said the panel plans to review tax records from other firms receiving federal money, but he was unsure if it would look at every firm. "We're not done," he said. Banks and other firms receiving federal money were required to sign contracts stating they had no unpaid taxes, Lewis said. But he said the Treasury Department did not ask them to turn over their tax records. Neil Barofsky, special inspector general for the Troubled Asset Relief Program, told the hearing that if an executive signed a contract knowing that information about unpaid taxes was false, "that would potentially be a crime." He said his office will look to see if crimes were committed. No one from the Treasury Department appeared at Thursday's hearing. Lewis said he asked Treasury officials for a private briefing on their efforts to uncover unpaid taxes, as well as someone to testify at Thursday's hearing.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Palin turns down almost half of stimulus funds

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP)—Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin says she will accept just 55 percent of the estimated \$930 million in federal stimulus funds that could flow to the state. The former vice presidential candidate said Thursday she would accept money that is “timely, targeted and temporary” and does not create strings that will bind the state later. It’s up to the Legislature to weigh in on the rest of the package. Democratic state Rep. Les Gara says he is shocked the governor would turn away money. Palin says she is acting in Alaskans’ best interests. Some GOP governors, including Mark Sanford of South Carolina and Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, also have rejected some stimulus money. Others, including Arnold Schwarzenegger of California and Charlie Crist of Florida, have welcomed it.

Olson not allowed to do interviews, husband says

MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—A raft of conditions imposed on former 1970s radical Sara Jane Olson during her one-year probation apparently includes a ban on media interviews. Olson’s husband, Fred Peterson, told The Associated Press in declining an interview Thursday that they “do not comply with the conditions of Sara’s parole.” A Ramsey County parole office spokesman declined to confirm the interview ban, but noted that some of California’s restrictions were not made public. A spokeswoman for the California prison system didn’t immediately return a call. The 62-year-old Olson was freed in California on Tuesday after serving half of a 14-year sentence for crimes committed with the Symbionese Liberation Army.

NC man sorry for role in his family’s slaying

HICKORY, N.C. (AP)—On the outside, Brian Tzeo’s days all looked the same. Up at 6 a.m. Wash face. Cup of coffee and a kiss goodbye for the kids. Always prompt for his shift at a North Carolina paper mill. That regular working dad routine hid his entanglement in an opium smuggling ring that reached all the way to Thailand, and eventually led to the slayings of his wife and three children at their home, investigators say. “I regret everything,” Tzeo said Thursday in an exclusive interview with The Associated Press. “It’s something I never should have gotten involved in. It’s hard to live with this.” Tzeo declined to discuss any details of his alleged drug dealing and he has not been charged. For friends and family of the thin, mild-mannered Laotian refugee, the allegations were just as shocking as the March 12 stabbing and shooting deaths of his family.

Ex-Bush admin official: Many at Gitmo are innocent

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP)—Many detainees locked up at Guantanamo were innocent men swept up by U.S. forces unable to distinguish enemies from noncombatants, a former Bush administration official said Thursday. “There are still innocent people there,” Lawrence B. Wilkerson, a Republican who was chief of staff to then-Secretary of State Colin Powell, told The Associated Press. “Some have been there six or seven years.”

Wilkerson, who first made the assertions in an Internet posting on Tuesday, told the AP he learned from briefings and by communicating with military commanders that the U.S. soon realized many Guantanamo detainees were innocent but nevertheless held them in hopes they could provide information for a “mosaic” of intelligence.

“It did not matter if a detainee were innocent. Indeed, because he lived in Afghanistan and was captured on or near the battle area, he must know something of importance,” Wilkerson wrote in the blog. He said intelligence analysts hoped to gather “sufficient information about a village, a region, or a group of individuals, that dots could be connected and terrorists or their plots could be identified.”

Wilkerson, a retired Army colonel, said vetting on the bat-



In this image reviewed by the U.S. Military, a Guantanamo detainee is escorted by guards at Camp 4 detention facility, at the U.S. Naval Base, in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Nov. 18, 2008.

tlefield during the early stages of U.S. military operations in Afghanistan was incompetent with no meaningful attempt to determine “who we were transporting to Cuba for detention

and interrogation.”

Navy Cmdr. Jeffrey Gordon, a Pentagon spokesman, declined to comment on Wilkerson’s specific allegations but noted that the military has con-

sistently said that dealing with foreign fighters from a wide variety of countries in a wartime setting was a complex process. The military has insisted that those held at Guantanamo were enemy combatants and posed a threat to the United States.

In his posting for The Washington Note blog, Wilkerson wrote that “U.S. leadership became aware of this lack of proper vetting very early on and, thus, of the reality that many of the detainees were innocent of any substantial wrongdoing, had little intelligence value, and should be immediately released.”

Former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Vice President Dick Cheney fought efforts to address the situation, Wilkerson said, because “to have admitted this reality would have been a black mark on their leadership.”

Wilkerson told the AP in a telephone interview that many detainees “clearly had no connection to al-Qaida and the Taliban and were in the wrong place at the wrong time. Pakistanis turned many over for \$5,000 a head.”

Some 800 men have been held at Guantanamo since the prison opened in January 2002, and 240 remain. Wilkerson said two dozen are terrorists, including confessed Sept. 11 plotter

Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, who was transferred to Guantanamo from CIA custody in September 2006.

“We need to put those people in a high-security prison like the one in Colorado, forget them and throw away the key,” Wilkerson said. “We can’t try them because we tortured them and didn’t keep an evidence trail.”

But the rest of the detainees need to be released, he said.

Wilkerson, who flew combat missions as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and left the government in January 2005, said he did not speak out while in government because some of the information was classified. He said he feels compelled to do so now because Cheney has claimed in recent press interviews that President Barack Obama is making the U.S. less safe by ordering Guantanamo closed and reversing other Bush administration policies.

The administration is now evaluating what to do with the prisoners who remain at the U.S. military base in Cuba.

“I’m very concerned about the kinds of things Cheney is saying to make it seem Obama is a danger to this republic,” Wilkerson said. “To have a former vice president fearmongering like this is really, really dangerous.”

Obama asks for patience, guarantees better days ahead

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Buoyed by adoring crowds far from Washington’s political wars, President Barack Obama guaranteed Americans on Thursday that the nation’s economy will recover, though he asked them for patience.

Obama looked every bit the campaigner as he sometimes mocked his GOP critics, and sometimes asked people to forgive his shortcomings. In general, his demeanor and message were more upbeat than in recent days when public fury over executive bonuses dominated Congress.

“We will come out on the other side stronger and a more prosperous nation,” he said, acknowledging the nation’s economic crisis. “That I can guarantee you. I can’t tell you how long it will take, what obstacles we’ll face along the way, but I promise you this: There will be brighter days ahead.”

The comments brought another roar of approval from about 1,000 people at a town hall forum in Los Angeles, where questions were more fawning than pressing. “I’m very glad and thankful that you are our president,” the first questioner began. The second said, “thank God for you.”

Obama capped his day by tapping an appearance on comedian Jay Leno’s late-night talk show. He told Leno he was “stunned” when he first was informed of the big bonuses received by some employees at the bailed-out AIG insurance company.

“We’re going to do everything we can to get these bonuses back,” the president said.

Earlier, in the town-hall meeting—his second in California in as many days—Obama asked Americans to back his plans to overhaul health care, change energy policies, and spend more on roads, education and many other areas to boost the stalled economy. The resulting large deficits will be temporary and justified, he said.

He told Americans not to expect “something for nothing” from their government. Improvements to the economy and medical care will take time, he said.

“Nothing is free,” the president said. Responding to a woman’s complaint about cuts in jobs and salaries for California teachers, Obama urged people not to ask the federal and state governments to cut taxes and improve services at the same time.

“At some point you’ve got to make some choices,” he said.

Homeless in Calif. ‘tent city’ to get shelter

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP)—Mayor Kevin Johnson on Thursday announced temporary plans to move about 150 residents of a homeless encampment featured last month on “The Oprah Winfrey Show” to shelters and transitional housing.

Johnson said the plan would extend a winter shelter on the state fairgrounds slated to close March 31 until the end of June so that the homeless from “Tent City” could be accommodated. He said the shelter also would add beds and provide more private areas for residents.

Other community groups

also have agreed to take in more people temporarily, and one charity will lease about 40 permanent housing units. The city estimated the relocation effort would cost about \$1 million.

“We wanted to be very clear to the people living along the river that we were not just going to go out and sweep them out of there. That would not be the humane thing to do,” Johnson said in a news conference at City Hall. “(They) are already living in inhumane conditions—there’s no running water, no sanitation. It’s a pub-

lic safety issue.”

Calif. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on Wednesday visited the encampment north of the city’s downtown along the American River, which received worldwide attention after the Oprah show even though there are similar camps elsewhere in California and in Portland, Ore., Seattle, Chattanooga, Tenn., and Columbus, Ohio.

Johnson said the Oprah show “shined a very bright spotlight on our particular situation, we looked at it as an opportunity now to act.”

Dallas school accused of staging caged fights

DALLAS (AP)—The Dallas school system was rocked by allegations Thursday that staff members at an inner-city high school made students settle their differences by fighting bare-knuckle brawls inside a steel cage.

The principal and other employees at South Oak Cliff High knew about the cage fights and allowed the practice to continue, according to a 2008 report by school system investigators.

“More than anything, I’m in shock and disbelief—shocked that this could ever occur and shocked that it would be condoned by a professional administrator,” said Jerome

Garza, a member of the Dallas school board.

The report, first obtained by The Dallas Morning News, describes two instances of fighting in an equipment cage in a boys’ locker room between 2003 and 2005. It was not clear from the report whether there were other fights.

Superintendent Michael Hinojosa told the newspaper that there were “some things that happened inside of a cage” and called the fights “unacceptable.”

No criminal charges were ever filed, and there was no mention in the report of whether anyone required

medical attention or whether any employees were disciplined. A district spokesman would not comment.

The allegations came to light during a grade-fixing investigation that eventually cost the high school its 2005 and 2006 state basketball titles. School officials were suspected of altering students’ grades so that they could remain eligible to play for South Oak Cliff, a perennial basketball powerhouse in one of the poorer sections of the city.

In an interview with the Morning News, Donald Moten, who retired as principal last year, denied any fights were held.

Asia

N. Korea reportedly detains 2 US journalists

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Two American journalists were missing Friday after they reportedly were detained by North Korea for ignoring warnings to stop shooting footage of the reclusive country.

Journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee, reporters for former Vice President Al Gore's online media outlet Current TV, were seized Tuesday along the Chinese-North Korean border, according to news reports and an activist who had worked with them. Their

and said they were working with the Chinese government to ascertain the whereabouts of the Americans.

"When you have two American citizens who are being held against their will, we want to find out all the facts and gain

Foyer, refused to say in an e-mail whether negotiations for the Americans' release were under way but acknowledged that Sweden acts as Washington's representative because the U.S. does not have diplomatic relations with North Korea.

Calls to North Korea's mission to the United Nations in New York went unanswered Thursday.

In San Francisco, an employee of Current TV told reporters: "There will be no comment on the situation anytime today."



These undated photo show two American journalists Laura Ling, right, and Euna Lee. Ling and Lee were detained by North Korean soldiers while on a reporting trip earlier in the week near the country's border with China, South Korean news reports said Thursday, March 19, 2009.

Chinese guide also was detained although a third journalist with the group, Mitch Koss, apparently eluded capture.

U.S. officials expressed concern to North Korean officials about the reported detentions

their release," State Department spokesman Robert A. Wood said Thursday in Washington.

U.S. officials also were in contact with Swedish diplomats in North Korea. Sweden's Ambassador to Pyongyang, Mats

Ling is a sister of Lisa Ling, a former co-host of the American TV talk show "The View" and now a contributing correspondent for National Geographic Channel's "Explorer" TV show. She said the family had no comment.

China not boosting South China Sea naval presence

BEIJING (AP)—China has no plans to beef up its naval presence in the South China Sea following a confrontation earlier this month between Chinese boats and a U.S. Navy ship, an official newspaper reported Friday.

The brief comment in the China Daily adds to apparent efforts by Beijing to tamp down the controversy surrounding the March 7 incident in which the USNS Impeccable was surrounded and harassed by Chinese boats.

"Top commanders do not have plans to increase the military presence in the South China Sea following a confrontation earlier this month between a U.S. spy ship and five Chinese vessels," the paper said, citing unidentified naval sources.

The report gave no additional

information, although it quoted government-backed Chinese academics as saying Beijing wanted to put the incident to rest.

"It is time to call an end to it," Li Jie, a senior researcher at the navy academy, was quoted as saying.

U.S. officials filed a formal diplomatic protest, insisting the unarmed U.S. survey ship was operating legally in international waters and accusing the Chinese of acting in a provocative and dangerous manner. China insists the Impeccable was carrying out sensitive activities within its exclusive economic zone without Beijing's permission and that its ships were merely enforcing Chinese law.

While Friday's report appeared to diminish the likelihood of naval clashes, China may be

planning to boost its presence in the area through increased patrols by fisheries administration enforcement vessels, China Daily reported Thursday.

Last week, China dispatched a converted naval vessel to patrol fishing grounds surrounding the disputed Paracel Islands, about 400 miles (640 kilometers) south of Hong Kong. China, Taiwan and Vietnam all claim the islands.

China Daily quoted fisheries department director Wu Zhuang as saying additional patrols were needed to handle new "challenges and complications" in overseeing the 1.16 million-square-mile (3 million-square-kilometer) South China Sea, which Beijing claims in its entirety. Five other nations also claim it in part or in whole.

tor. The rockets missed the security forces' base, but one hit the town's commercial area, killing 10 civilians, injuring 38 and setting fire to a timber yard and 20 nearby shops, Khan told The Associated Press.

Singapore court rules Journal editor in contempt

SINGAPORE (AP)—A Singapore judge ruled a senior Wall Street Journal editor was in contempt of court Thursday for two editorials and a letter to the editor published last year about the city-state's judiciary, the attorney general's office said. Prosecutors said the editorials and letter questioned the independence of the judiciary from the ruling People's Action Party and that they implied that the country's courts stifle dissent. The High Court previously had found the Journal in contempt of court in a November ruling on the three writings, and on Thursday it additionally found Melanie Kirkpatrick, deputy editor of the Journal's editorial page, in contempt. High Court Justice Tay Yong Kwang fined Kirkpatrick 10,000 Singapore dollars (\$6,549) and said she must pay the same amount in legal costs, the attorney general said in a statement.

World



A building, where a small plane crashed, burns in Quito, Thursday, March 19, 2009.

Small plane crashes into Ecuador building; 7 dead

QUITO, Ecuador (AP)—A small army plane slammed into an apartment building in an upscale neighborhood of Ecuador's mountainous capital on Thursday, killing five people aboard the aircraft and two more on the ground.

The plane grazed a house before plowing into the four-story building, sending a fireball and black smoke into the evening sky and filling a residential yard with the aircraft's wreckage. A thick mist

shrouded the neighborhood at the time, though the cause of the crash was unknown.

"It was horrible. I heard the plane flying very low, then I heard the explosion," neighbor Camille Avfert told The Associated Press. "We ran out onto the street and saw fire."

Quito fire chief Atahualpa Sanchez said emergency crews recovered the victims' badly burned bodies, while rescuers evacuated an unspecified number of injured

people in stable condition. AP journalists at the scene saw rescuers carry away a girl whose head was bloodied.

The army said three soldiers on the plane died: the pilot, a major; the co-pilot, a lieutenant; and the mechanic. In a statement, it said the pilot's wife and son were also killed.

The Red Cross reported that two more people on the ground died, including a woman identified as Elena Reascos, the mother of a 9-year-old boy.

Mexico nabs suspected cartel leader without a shot

MEXICO CITY (AP)—A purported top leader of Mexico's Sinaloa drug cartel was in police custody Thursday, as authorities extended a cross-border crackdown on the gang that has included the arrest of 755 of its members in the U.S.

Vicente "El Vicentillo" Zambada was arrested before dawn Wednesday at a home in an elite Mexico City neighborhood, said Gen. Luis Arturo Oliver, the Mexican Defense Department's deputy chief of operations.

Oliver said Zambada became a top Sinaloa cartel leader last year, with control over logistics and the authority to order assassinations of government authorities and rivals.

"This significantly affects the organization's ability to operate and distribute drugs," said Ricardo Cabrera, who runs the terrorism and drug trafficking unit in Mexico's federal Attorney General's office.

Zambada's father, Ismael "El Mayo" Zambada, also is consid-

ered a top leader of the Sinaloa cartel and is among Mexico's most-wanted suspects.

Last month, President Barack Obama's administration announced that investigators had arrested 755 Sinaloa cartel members in cities and towns all over the United States.

The U.S. is seeking Zambada's extradition under a 2003 trafficking indictment, but he will have to face charges in Mexico before the request can be considered.

WORLD BRIEFS

Bin Laden exhorts Somali militants in Web message

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—Osama bin Laden urged Somalis on Thursday to overthrow their new president, issuing a statement that clearly outlines al-Qaida's ambitions in a nation long feared to be a haven for the terrorist network. Bin Laden's 11 1/2-minute audiotape was entirely focused on Somalia, an impoverished country in the Horn of Africa that has been in chaos for nearly two decades, torn apart by warlords and Islamic militant groups. In January, parliament elected President Sheikh Sharif Sheikh Ahmed, a moderate Islamist, in hopes that he would unify the country's factions. "I think people who were skeptical that al-Qaida has ambition in Somalia will now have to think twice," Rashid Abdi, an analyst at the International Crisis Group think tank in Nairobi told The Associated Press.

Church faces challenges in Africa amid pope visit

LUANDA, Angola (AP)—In Africa, some Roman Catholic priests have children and nuns counsel patients to use condoms against the scourge of AIDS. Faithful consult medicine men even though the church condemns that as witchcraft. As Pope Benedict XVI makes his first pilgrimage this week to the continent that has the world's fastest-growing congregation of

Catholics, the church faces enormous challenges despite its growing presence here. The number of Catholics has ballooned from fewer than 2 million to nearly 140 million over the last century, while Africa also is ordaining priests at a higher rate than anywhere else. Ordinations rose by nearly 30 percent in 2007, the Vatican reported last month.

Israel to probe reported abuse by soldiers in Gaza

JERUSALEM (AP)—Israel's military on Thursday ordered a criminal inquiry into its own soldiers' reports that some troops killed Palestinian civilians, including children, during the Gaza war by hastily opening fire, confident that relaxed rules of engagement would protect them. Their accounts, published in a military institute's newsletter, echo Palestinian allegations and feed into human rights groups' contention that Israel violated the laws of war. Soldiers also reported the wanton destruction of civilian property. The troops spoke at a get-together with students enrolled in a military preparatory course. The transcript of the session appeared this week in a newsletter the institute publishes, Israeli newspapers reported. The head of the course, Danny Zamir, told the Haaretz daily he was "shocked" and relayed the reports to Israeli military chief Lt.-Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi because he feared serious ethical lapses among troops.

ASIAN BRIEFS

33 militants killed in clashes in Afghanistan

KABUL (AP)—Afghan and international forces killed 33 militants in two days of clashes in Afghanistan, U.S. forces said Friday. Afghan army and U.S.-coalition troops killed 30 militants in a firefight in southern Afghanistan on Thursday, the U.S. said in a statement released late that night. The troops were patrolling in a militant-heavy area of Helmand province's Gereshk district when they started receiving gunfire and returned fire, the U.S. said. One Afghan soldier was injured during the operation, the statement said.

Militants' rocket in Pakistan tribal area kills 10

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Security forces launched a hunt Friday for suspected Taliban militants who fired rockets toward their base in north-west Pakistan, killing 10 people near a key supply route for international forces in Afghanistan, an official said. The militants fired three rockets late Thursday near the town of Landi Kotal, about six miles (10 kilometers) west of the Afghan border, said Rashid Khan, an area government administra-

Maharlika

PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS

Saturday, March 21, 2009

Only 3,325 Filipinos in NMI are OWWA members

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

A few months ago, a Filipino worker on Saipan jokingly asked his colleague who was fixing electrical wirings in a building at the time whether he has a life insurance under the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, just in case he gets electrocuted. The worker was not an OWWA member. He did not get electrocuted, but he died of stroke a day later. Had he been an OWWA member, his family in the Philippines could have received at least P100,000 to be able to make a good start after his untimely passing. Families could get as much as P200,000 for accidental deaths.

Sad tales about not having an OWWA life insurance and other benefits are common in the CNMI, where only 3,325 or about 41 percent of the estimated 8,000 Filipino workers have OWWA membership.

Philippine labor attaché to the CNMI Joan Lourdes Lavilla said applying for OWWA membership is a matter of taking responsibility for one's own future and one's family's future.

"Think about the economic consequences of your death. It's a personal responsibility," Lavilla told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

She said a worker's \$25 OWWA membership fee a year can go a long way in

helping the family when the worker dies.

Among the highest membership rate

In recent years, OWWA membership among Filipinos in the CNMI has been increasing.

From only 2,856 in 2005, the number went up to 2,917 in 2006, dipped to 2,758 in 2007, before going up to 3,325 in 2008.

OWWA welfare officer Reynaldo D. Tayag also said that despite only 3,325 members in 2008, the CNMI has actually one of the highest OWWA membership among Filipino communities across the globe.

In other countries, OWWA renewal happens only once in

two years, while on Saipan, workers get to renew their membership every year.

Lavilla said Filipino workers in the CNMI are also reminded right away of their membership renewal every time they go on vacation in the Philippines.

OWWA, an attached agency of the Philippine Department of Labor and Employment, is the lead government agency tasked to protect and promote

the welfare and well-being of overseas Filipino workers and their dependents.

An OWWA membership provides life/accident insurance, among other benefits. A member is covered with life insurance for the duration of his employment contract. The coverage includes P100,000 for natural death and P200,000 for accidental death. A member shall be entitled to disability/dismemberment benefits rang-

ing from P2,000 to P50,000.

Filipino workers who want to become OWWA members should apply in person at the OWWA office on the ground floor of the Marianas Business Plaza (formerly Nauru Building) in Susupe. Besides Monday to Friday office hours, OWWA is also open on Sundays from 10am to 3pm, but during Sunday when there are trainings, office hours are from 8:30am to 5pm.

US embassy: No idea where Nicole is

By CYNTHIA BALANA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—The United States embassy in Manila said on Thursday it did not know the whereabouts of "Nicole," who American serviceman Daniel Smith was convicted of raping, and whose case tested the Philippine-US Visiting Forces Agreement.

Rebecca Thompson, embassy spokesperson, said in an interview that they were aware of media reports suggesting Nicole had already left for the US and recanted her previous testimony in the court, casting doubt on whether she was actually raped by Smith.

"We don't have further information suggesting her where-

abouts," Thompson said.

She also refused to say anything about Nicole's visa application.

"Everyday, people come here for visa application[s] and, for privacy reason[s], we don't divulge details about them or their applications," she said.

Meantime, the Malacañang Palace urged critics of "Nicole" to leave her alone and respect her decision to leave the country.

Deputy presidential spokesperson Anthony Golez said Nicole's lawyers and supporters "cannot be very emotional" because it was their client's "right" to make such a move.

"That's very personal to Nicole, whatever her reasons are, and I think we should all respect

that and we should move on," Golez told a news conference at the Palace.

"We cannot do anything about it because Nicole is they key player in this and that's her right to do what she has done," he said.

Asked if Nicole should be left alone, Golez said: "She should be left, because yun ang gusto niya, kagustuhan niya e [that's what she wants]."

But despite Nicole's move, Golez said Manila would still continue with negotiations with Washington to comply with a Supreme Court ruling that ordered the transfer of Lance Corporal Daniel Smith from the US Embassy to a Philippine facility.



'CHEAP WATER'

Protesters display placards shaped like water drops as they stage a rally in front of the United Nations office in time for the World Water Day Friday, March 20, 2009, in Manila's financial district of Makati, Philippines. The protesters urged the U.N. to withdraw its support to the ongoing World Water Forum led by the think-tank World Water Council, which they allege has ties with transnational water corporations pushing for higher water rates.

AP PHOTO/PAT ROQUE

Japanese companies in Philippines lay off workers

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Two Japanese computer parts makers will lay off 3,750 of their factory workers in the Philippines because of weakening demand, media reports and officials said Thursday.

Fujitsu Computer Products Philippines, which manufactures hard disks, has informed the Philippine Export Zone Authority it will dismiss 1,750 workers in coming months, according to Elmer San Pascual, a spokesman for the authority, which oversees industrial parks around the country. The factory employed 5,000 as of December.

Local media quoted Philippine Labor Secretary Marianito Roque

as saying TDK Fujitsu Philippines Corp. will lay off 2,000 workers from a factory that makes magnetic heads for computers. Roque did not return phone calls.

San Pascual said he could not immediately confirm the TDK Fujitsu report but said that the factory had started to cut back the number of weekly work days from seven to four in January.

Both plants are in industrial parks in Laguna province, near Manila.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said the layoffs were beyond the control of the government and "unavoidable due to the global economic crisis." He said the

government will help the unemployed workers through a Labor Department livelihood and employment program.

San Pascual said at least one company—Toshiba Philippines, which also makes computer parts—will be expanding and may hire about 400 workers.

Earlier this year, U.S. computer chip maker Intel Corp. announced it will close its factory in the Philippines and dismiss 1,800 workers this year.

Another 800 workers lost their jobs in February after FedEx Corp. moved its Asian hub from the Philippines to its new \$150 million facility in Guangzhou, in southern China.

LABOR FRONT

Workers' right to work on temporary basis

By FERDIE PONCE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Q: If an alien worker's labor complaint is still under mediation process and no agreement has come out, can he or she work on a temporary basis?

A: According to the new Labor Rules and Regulations, a Labor Administrative Hearing Officer may authorize a foreign national worker who attends a mediation session at which no agreement is reached to seek employment on a temporary basis pending a hearing in the case.

The Regulations state that an alien worker to whom permission to seek temporary work is granted shall make a good faith effort to find work. The worker is required to appear in person at Labor Enforcement at least once in each calendar month to report on such efforts to find work. Failure to make a good effort to find work will be grounds for denying a request for transfer. Failure to report or

false or fraudulent reports will also be grounds to dismiss the pending labor case.

■■■
Q: How long can an alien worker, who is given a Temporary Work Authorization, work while his or her labor complaint is pending?

A: If a foreign national worker who has received permission to seek temporary work finds an employer, Labor shall issue a TWA for up to six months while the case is pending.

According to the regulations, a TWA may be renewed for an equal term. TWA will expire automatically 10 days after the date of a hearing officer's final order in the case, "or in the event of a timely appeal 10 days after the date of the Labor Secretary's order, or in the event of a timely appeal to a court 10 days after the date of the court's final order."

■■■
Q: What is the first proper step that an employer should do after hiring an alien work-

er under a TWA?

A: The Regulations state that an employer who hires a foreign national worker under a TWA shall file with Labor prior to the commencement of any work by the worker a statement of employment terms on the standard form provided by Labor.

Disclaimer: Readers should conduct their own research and due diligence and obtain professional legal advice. Saipan Tribune will not be liable for any loss or damage caused by a reader's reliance on information obtained from this section. Submit questions on labor issues to Saipan Tribune via e-mail at editor@saipantribune.com, or by calling 235-6397, 235-2440, or 235-8747 and leaving a message at Ext. 133 or 135. You may also submit questions in person by writing it down and dropping it off at the Saipan Tribune's office on the second floor of the JP Centre on Beach Road, Garapan.

'Estrada, Lacson were behind Dacer slaying'

By VOLT CONTRERAS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Ex-police official was told to cover up crime

MANILA, Philippines—"Tapusin muna namin si Delta, sir, kasi naiirita na si Bigote sa kaniya." [We will finish off Delta first, sir, because Bigote is already irked with him.]

This curt, coded remark, supposedly spoken inside a car en route to a Japanese restaurant in October 2000 appears to link the fates of three men in a murder mystery that has festered for eight years.

"Delta" referred to publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer whose burned remains and those of his driver Emmanuel Corbito would be found months later.

"Sir" referred to then Chief Supt. Panfilo Lacson, and "Bigote" (Filipino for moustache) referred to then President Joseph Estrada.

The person saying "sir" was then police senior superintendent Michael Ray Aquino.

Recounting the exchange is former police senior superintendent Cezar Mancao II who today claims that Lacson gave him direct orders immediately after the Dacer-Corbito murders to cover up the grisly deed.

In an affidavit executed on Feb. 14 in the United States, Mancao recalled what he said he knew or heard of the "special operations" that led to the abduction and brutal killing of Dacer and Corbito.

He said it was from Aquino that he learned that the operations were "approved and cleared by Lacson and by Malacañang itself."

The *Philippine Daily Inquirer* got a copy of the affidavit which Mancao, currently under the custody of US federal marshals in Florida and reportedly days away from extradition to the Philippines, executed before Philippine Honorary Consul General Angelo Macatangay.

Both Estrada and Lacson have consistently denied any role in the murders.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the *Inquirer's* copy—obtained from a government official who asked not to be identified for lack of authority to release the document—of Mancao's affidavit was "similar" with the affidavit he has in his possession. The *Inquirer* had contacted Gonzalez to validate its copy, and read to him excerpts from the affidavit.

In his affidavit, Mancao said that after Dacer and Corbito were killed, Lacson ordered him to "control the situation" by heading the investigation himself.

Mancao said documents recovered from Dacer's vehicle were also burned, though he never witnessed this and only learned about it from his subordinate.

He recalled how Lacson, after being elected senator in May 2001 and with Estrada out of power, supposedly ordered him and Aquino to leave and go to the United States, where they received "monthly allowance" personally from Lacson for at least two years.

Mancao recalled first learning about the "special operations" within the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), which was created by Estrada, with Lacson as its head and Aquino as its chief of operations. Mancao headed PAOCTF's Task Group Luzon.



Estrada



Lacson



Dacer



Mancao

Mancao said, he found out "from my operatives' dispatch slips that Aquino was utilizing some of my personnel at TG Luzon in his 'special operations' without my knowledge."

That same day, Mancao and his subordinate, TG Luzon deputy for operations Supt. Glenn Dumlaog, went to Aquino's office to inquire on the matter.

Aquino then told them that "these 'special operations' had been previously approved and cleared by Lacson and by Malacañang itself," Mancao said.

"Dumlaog also mentioned to me that the special operations had for its target a certain media man critical of Erap, whom they referred to as Delta," he added.

Later that month, on board Lacson's car en route to a Japanese restaurant in Greenhills, San Juan, for lunch, "I heard Lacson order Aquino to liquidate (Reynaldo) Berroya, his publicly-known nemesis."

Berroya was formerly the Philippine National Police intelligence chief and is now transportation and communications assistant secretary.

'Tactical interrogation'

The alleged instruction to Aquino was "Noy, tirahin nyo na si Bero (Hit Bero now)."

Mancao said Aquino answered by saying that he "intends to neutralize or liquidate Delta first because Erap was already peeved at him. 'Tapusin muna namin si Delta, sir, kasi naiirita na si Bigote sa kanya'."

Lacson then allegedly insisted that Aquino "operate on both Berroya and Dacer simultaneously."

Mancao said he was seated next to the driver, one Sgt. Oximoso (alias Oxy), while Lacson and Aquino sat at the back during this exchange.

At around 11 a.m. of Nov. 24 that year, Mancao said, he was with Dumlaog at the TG Luzon office when the latter "suddenly excused himself because he supposedly received a text message from Aquino saying that Dacer was already in the custody of Viña."

Supt. Teofilo Viña, who then headed PAOCTF's Task Group Visayas, was already holding Dacer somewhere in Cavite, according to the text message.

Aquino's message also directed Dumlaog "to proceed to the area to conduct tactical interrogation of Dacer," Mancao said.

After Dumlaog had left, Mancao said he called up Viña, who then "confirmed the operation and told me that he will take care of it and that the same was upon the orders of Aquino."

Dumlaog later returned to the office and "told me that he did not obtain any valuable information from the subject (Dacer)," Mancao said.

Lacson's order

Mancao said that after confirming

"Dacer's abduction," he asked Lacson for "his guidance on the matter."

Lacson then supposedly instructed Mancao to head the investigation of the incident, "since doing so will allow PAOCTF to control the situation by covering up the involvement of PAOCTF personnel."

Mancao added: "Accordingly, I dispatched my men to conduct a regular investigation of the incident; I also required all investigating police stations to forward to us all relevant

documents, making us the repository of these documents."

Days after Dacer's vehicle was found abandoned in a ravine in Maragondon, Cavite, Mancao said he remembered confronting Dumlaog.

Viña shot dead

"Akala ko ba pinlantsa niya [Viña] ng maayos? Mapapasama tuloy tayong lahat dito (I thought he would take care of everything. We will all get into trouble for this)," he told Dumlaog.

In response, Dumlaog told Mancao that he had gotten hold of documents recovered from Dacer's vehicle.

"I commented that it was risky for him to be keeping them," Mancao said. "I later on learned that Dumlaog disposed of the documents by burning the same."

Viña was shot dead in Tanza, Cavite in January 2003.

After Lacson's election to the Senate in 2001, Mancao said Lacson called him and Aquino to a meeting at a house in Greenhills, San Juan.

Monthly allowance

Lacson then purportedly instructed his two aides to leave the country "since the new administration would surely go after us in the Dacer-Corbito murder case, among others, in order to destroy his (Lacson's) reputation and presidential ambition."

Lacson assured him and Aquino that "he will take care of both of us and will continue to give us our monthly allowance," Mancao said.

Also present in that meeting was Jane Gomez, "a vital witness in the Kuratong Baleleng incident," Mancao added.

On July 1 that year, Mancao left the country, first having a rendezvous with Aquino in Hong Kong, before proceeding to the United States.



GMO-FREE ZONE

In this photo released by the Greenpeace, giant "GMO-Free Zone" signs are displayed at the world famous Ifugao Rice Terraces by the environmentalist group as an Ifugao farmer weeds her plot Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at Banaue, Ifugao province in northern Philippines. In a ceremony Tuesday, the provincial government of Ifugao and Greenpeace signed a circular declaring the Philippine rice terraces, a UNESCO Living Cultural Heritage site, a genetically-modified organism-free zone, which means they will only plant traditional rice varieties.

AP

Isn't it strange? Why recant now, Nicole?

By MICHAEL LIM UBAC
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Was her convicted rapist, if not the US government itself, behind the change of heart of "Nicole," the Filipino woman who briefly served as a symbol of the purported inequity of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA)?

At least three senators are nursing suspicions in the wake of Nicole's submission of a sworn statement raising doubt about her rape by Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, and her flight to the United States, apparently for good.

According to Sen. Loren Legarda, Nicole's case has implications on the VFA, which governs the conduct of US troops in the Philippines and which is now the subject of calls for review or

outright termination.

"There's more than meets the eye in this issue," she said, noting that the agreement that became effective in 1999 was very important with respect to the United States' war on terror and its strategic and security interests in the Asian region.

"It cannot be discounted that extreme pressures may have been applied on Nicole for her to recant her [court testimony] at the risk of inviting perjury and other charges against her," said Legarda, who had voted against the ratification of the agreement.

"Nicole's leaving for the US also raises questions because if it is true that she may have wrongfully accused Smith of raping her, why would she choose to live in the native land of the man she may have wronged?"

Legarda said.

In a statement, Sen. Francis Pangilinan raised "serious questions about the form and timing" of Nicole's sworn statement dated March 12.

"What boggles my mind right now is why the new affidavit came from the lawyer of Daniel Smith and not her own lawyer," Pangilinan said.

"Isn't that strange?" he said, calling attention to "the timing of events" that included the "scuffle over Smith's custody," US President Barack Obama's telephone call to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo stating his commitment to the VFA, and Nicole's affidavit.

"Why just now?" said Pangilinan, who filed in February Senate Resolution No. 892 calling for the termination of the VFA.

'Without my knowledge'

In the early part of October 2000, Man-

Hostages: 'Why does govt want us to die?'



Western Mindanao military chief Marine Lt. Gen. Nelson Allaga pins a medal Thursday March 19, 2009 at a government hospital in Zamboanga city to one of 19 soldiers wounded in clashes with Abu Sayyaf extremists in the southern Philippine island of Sulu. Philippine troops agreed to pull back Thursday from a jungle stronghold of al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf extremists in exchange for a pledge by the militants to free one of three Red Cross hostages, officials said. Philippine troops agreed to pull back Thursday from a jungle stronghold of al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf extremists in exchange for a pledge by the militants to free one of three Red Cross hostages, officials said.

By **ARLYN DELA CRUZ**
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Angry, exhausted and frustrated, the three Red Cross workers held hostage for two months by Abu Sayyaf kidnappers poured their hearts out in a phone conversation Thursday with Sen. Richard Gordon.

First allowed to speak at 2:20 p.m. by gang leader Albader Parad was Filipino Mary Jean Lacaba, who sounded afraid in the forested Indanan hideout on Jolo island, which was encircled by troops a day after clashes over the previous 48 hours had left five dead and 19 wounded.

"It is difficult to remain calm if your life is constantly on the line," Lacaba said in Filipino in a soft pleading voice, obviously shaking in fear as Gordon, who was in his Makati City office, coaxed her to remain strong.

"You don't know where a bullet will hit you," she said, "your head, your back ... you can see the fire fight."

Gordon replied: "Do not show them that you are weak. I am proud of you. Be strong."

Lacaba said she and the two other workers of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)—Eugenio Vagni of Italy and Andreas Notter of Switzerland—remained together during the clashes.

"It was terrible. We saw the gun battles in front of us. We saw the killings. It was really terrible," said the 37-year-old Filipino engineer.

"We have been here for 64 days," she said. "I don't know if we are ever going to be free."

Gordon told Lacaba not to lose hope. But Lacaba replied that it was tough to be courageous in the situation they were in. "It is easy for you to say that, senator, but it is very difficult ..."

Lacaba passed the cell phone to Vagni, 62, who did not even bother to greet the senator. Apparently in tears, he shouted: "Why does the government want us to die? I don't understand! I don't understand!"

'What is gov't doing?'

"I am not the government, Eugenio," said Gordon, chair of the Philippine National Red Cross. "I just can't turn my back on you. I need you to be strong. You need to be strong; can you do that for me?"

Still in high-pitched voice, Vagni yelled: "I am strong. We are strong. But what is the government doing? We came to the Philippines to do something good. Why do we have to die?"

Sobbing, he said: "We have to be strong. We will be stronger. But if the military will not pull out, we are going to die."

"I am trying my best," Gordon said. "I've had my pains in life, but it's nothing compared to yours."

Vagni, who is reported to be ailing, said the last few days had been very painful.

Sensing that the Italian was losing hope, Gordon said: "Remember who you are, Eugenio. I am going to fight for you, you remember that, but you must show your dignity ... Do not give up. We are doing our best."

"OK, senator. OK, OK," Vagni said.

'Catastrophic'

Notter was on the phone next. He sounded in a rage.

"The situation is very bad. It is catastrophic! I really cannot understand what your government is doing. Rescue? The government sent the military to rescue us? No! These guys came to kill us, have us killed, not rescue us!" he screamed.

Notter, 38, said the ICRC was invited by the Philippine government

in 1982 to undertake humanitarian mission. "Now they are going to kill us?"

Gordon tried to cut him, but Notter railed on: "One more attack, they are going to kill us! And let me tell you this, senator, if I'm going to survive this, I'm going to make sure that the whole world knows what happened here. This is going too far!"

Notter said the military action was a "completely wrong move." He asked what Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Alexander Yano was doing.

"I cannot understand the military. There is a chain of command but what is General Yano doing?"

Notter also mentioned the number of days since the three were seized by the Abu Sayyaf bandits on Jan. 15.

Word of honor

The conversations with Gordon lasted over an hour. The last time the hostages were allowed the use of a cell phone was on March 11, when they talked with their ICRC colleagues.

Parad had called Gordon on Tuesday to deny that he had been killed in the fire fight.

The kidnapper sounded apologetic Thursday. Gordon pleaded with him to release the hostages, saying they would not be in that condition if he had not seized them.

"You will not be embarrassed," Parad said.

He said that if the military pulled out, Gordon would get one hostage.

Parad did not repeat his threat to behead the ICRC workers if the military pressed their operation against the kidnappers.

He did not say whom he would release, but he said he would keep his word.

"Usapang lalaki." A gentleman's word.

TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR MONEY

Is freelancing an option?

Editor's Note: This is part of Take Charge of Your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: The company I am working for already served us employees notice that it will close its plant within the year. Only a skeletal force will remain until next year when operations will be completely halted. We are devastated by the news and anxious as to our future. I am still working, but will be out of work by June. Given the tough job market now, I am thinking of going on my own as a marketing consultant. Would this be a good option?—Rose

Answer: Tough times are really upon us now. Newspapers report job losses increasing daily, not just abroad but also locally.

You have two options: seek employment or go on your own. Now as to your question, would it be good to go freelance and work on your own?

Advantages of working freelance

There are a lot of people working freelance locally, and you may see a number of them working in coffee shops on their laptops, having meetings in mall restaurants, and squeezing in some gym time in the middle of a working day. Among the advantages of working freelance is the freedom to schedule your own working hours and hold office anywhere. For a lot of people, this can be liberating as they do not need to brave the rush hour to get to work at 8 a.m. every day and beat the Bundy clock.

Working freelance will also allow you to pursue and choose projects that you want to work on. You will also be able to chart your own career path and be your own boss. Your salary will also not be limited to a set amount every month subject to increase annually if you do well on your boss's evaluation. Instead, you will earn as much as you work—it all depends on you.

Disadvantages of working freelance

There are always two sides to a coin, though, and as there are advantages, there are also disadvantages when working freelance.

First of all, you won't have the security of having a regular paycheck. You will be paid as soon as your clients pay you, which may or may not be as quick as you wish.

Second, you will have to assume the responsibility of paying your own taxes to the government and contributions to the Social Security System (SSS) and Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth). You will also have to say goodbye to employee benefits such as health insurance coverage, group life insurance, and even 13th month pay, bonuses and paid vacation leaves.

Third, you will be working alone most of the time so for a while you may miss the company of offemates converging at the water station or coffee machine or having lunch with them every day.

Fourth, you will have no routine. Now while this may be a welcome advantage to some, to others this may be a disadvantage especially if they like structure and need boundaries (and bosses leading them) in order to be productive.

Are you suited for a freelance career?

Before you decide on going freelance, determine if you are suited for a freelance career. If you like the idea of taking charge of your career, being your own boss, and working by yourself, then go for it. If you prefer to be part of an organization and work as a team member, then you may be better off seeking employment.

Once you have decided to strike on your own, do these steps to ensure your success:

1. Assess your skills. Make an inventory of all your marketable skills and identify which ones you can offer to your clients. For instance, as a marketing consultant, you may be good at crafting marketing campaigns, from advertising to public relations and below-the-line advertising. Or you may be good at market research or a specific component of brand management. Find out your core competencies.

2. Start scoping the market now while you are still working. Network with friends, family, and business associates to find out if they or their contacts may have need for a marketing consultant. Check what the market may be in need of.

3. Build a financial safety net. Because a freelancer's salary is never guaranteed to come every 15th and 30th of the month, start building up your savings. Start with an emergency fund that may cover at least six months' worth of your regular expenses. Park this money in a stable bank that offers Internet, mobile and phone banking so you will be able to bank anywhere, anytime.

4. Scout for insurance coverage. You will be your best asset as a freelancer, so insure yourself. Get adequate health insurance coverage on your own beginning June after you get laid off. If you have dependents, get life insurance too so they will not be burdened should something happen to you.

5. Psyche yourself up to be ready for the market. You are a product to be marketed. Brush up on your skills and make collaterals (calling cards, etc.). Spruce up a corner in your home to start a home office. Invest in basic office equipment such as a computer and printer, and office supplies.

As long as you persevere and make an effort to do a good job, you will be valued by your clients. We wish you the best!

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Maharlika – PinoyStyle

'Boy' trouble

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Filipino filmmaker Aureus Solito's latest work, "Boy," has gotten into trouble with Singapore censors.

The city-state's censors, according to Solito who is currently in Amsterdam, disapproved "Boy," which was set to have its world premiere at the 22nd Singapore International Film Festival (SIFF) this month.

Disallowed

In an e-mail, Solito told Inquirer Entertainment that Zhang Wenjie, SIFF festival director, informed him that "Boy" had been "disallowed" because of a "gay lovemaking scene."

"Zhang said that the festival doesn't believe in asking filmmakers to reedit their works so that it can be shown publicly," recounted Solito, who made waves in the international festival circuit with his debut "Ang Pagdadalaga ni Maximo Oliveros."

According to Solito, Zhang was "disappointed and surprised" by the censors' decision because the organizers found the love scene "beautiful."

Solito described "Boy" as a "coming-of-age" story about a young poet who "discovers his sexuality and falls for a macho dancer."

Although Zhang had offered a private screening with the jury and a limited audience, Solito considered pulling out the film from the festival where it's in competition. "I make films for an audience, not a jury," Solito said.

"Boy" is not the only SIFF entry that has gotten the censors' axe, Solito revealed. "A Singaporean film, 'Female Games,' was also disallowed because of a lesbian love scene. Same with an Israeli documentary on suicide bombers."

At press time, Solito has decided to "withdraw from the competition, but is willing to have a private screening and open forum with the audience."

"I'm still awaiting SIFF's reaction on this," he said.

Second time around

It is Solito's second brush with censors.

"Three years ago, my second film 'Tuli' got an 'X' rating from the local censors (Movie and Television Review and Classification Board)," he recalled. "It was cut to pieces."

After the Singapore debacle, Solito has decided not to submit "Boy" to the MTRCB. "I hope to have public screenings in censorship-free venues like the UP Film Institute and the Cultural Center of the Philippines."

He is aware, however, of the raging row between the UP Film Institute and the MTRCB. "I hope UP will remain censorship-free," he said.

Solito related that his Singapore experience reminded him of a comment made by Jeremy Segay, Cannes Directors' Fortnight selection committee member: "He said the Philippines is still the most progressive country in the (Asian) region."

Solito also plans to screen "Boy" in the Torino Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, where he is part of the jury. "The ImagineNative in Toronto and Outfest in LA have also expressed interest," he said.

Charice aims for the Grammys

By BAYANI SAN DIEGO JR.
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Just how far is she headed?

Filipina singer Charice Pempengco doesn't claim to know the answer to that question.

"It's all up to God," she said.

But is she thinking of, maybe, going Hollywood?

After all, she sang not just in one, but two post-Oscar parties—in famed Beverly Hills resto Mr. Chow, and Oprah Winfrey's bash held at the Kodak Theater.

Does she see herself co-starring with "High School Musical" heartthrob Zac Efron?

"No. I'd rather be in an adventure-comedy with Alvin and the Chipmunks," she quipped.

The pint-sized Charice, 16, who can imitate the singing styles of local divas like Jessa Zaragoza and Sarah Geronimo, can likewise mimic the voices of Alvin, Simon, and Theodore from the animated music group Chipmunks.

But if there's anything at all that Charice wishes to achieve through music, it is to be included in the most prestigious industry event in America.

"What's on my mind is the Grammys," she said.

She hopes to attend next year's Grammy Awards as a nominee—especially since her debut album, currently being recorded and produced by David



Charice sponsors seven kids including Nicka for her education under World Vision. World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.

Foster, is set for release this summer.

"That's my dream," she admitted. "That one of my songs would be nominated, that I would win as Best New Artist."

She sang her first single off that album, "Fingerprint," along with Be-

yoncé Knowles' "Listen," in the two post-Oscar parties.

"I'm so thrilled because I saw a young girl on YouTube singing 'Fingerprint,'" Charice related. "To think I had just recorded it, but she has already memorized all the words!"

New kind of castaways in 'Survivor' 2

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Legions of Ilonggos trooped to the auditions of Survivor Philippines Season 2 held at SM Iloilo. I was so amused with the whole spectrum of "characters" who came up with all sorts of gimmicks to catch the judges' attention.

"We're making sure we don't get the same kind of castaways as in the first season," said Neil Gumban (program manager). "Iba dapat ang drama ng contenders in Season 2 so it won't seem just like a replay. They must give us a compelling reason why we should choose them, aside from their willingness to tackle challenges in a remote island for 39 days."

There was a 64-year-old snake charmer, a rape victim, a tricycle driver/model, dogwalker/receptionist, single mother, OFW and even beauty queens and celebrities who auditioned.

"We were surprised to see an actor and an actress show up," exclaimed Donna Medina (executive producer). "They were in disguise as they lined up. No special treatment for them. They don't have an edge though because this is no popularity contest."

GMA-7 is all geared up to make Sur-

vivor's second season more exciting than the first one. It gives away the biggest prize in a reality show—P3 million, tax-free. "The challenges will be more Pinoy," noted Alex Dionisio (segment producer). "We now know which challenges work and which don't. We will be more vigilant with safety measures."

Will host Paolo Bediones be willing to wear trunks to spice things up in Season 2? "I'd rather not distract the castaways (laughs)," Pao quipped. "What I'd like to do is be more of myself and add a little humor to my hosting."

Lesson learned from Survivor Season 1? "At the end of the day, despite the tough challenge we faced, we were one team,"

said Pao. "With constant prayer for strength and guidance from up above, we hurdled everything in the island."

He is pleased with the turnout of applicants. "The volume of people wanting to take a stab at it has lessened, but then again the quality so far is quite notable," said Pao. "People realize that it is real and it is hard and only those willing to go that extra distance will make it and deserve to be the second Pinoy sole survivor."

If you have what it takes (you must be 18 and above), try your luck at the

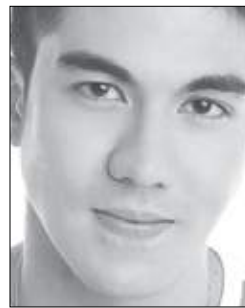
auditions on March 27 and 28 at SM North EDSA, and on March 29 and 30 at SM San Lazaro.

Heed the call of the wild and live on the edge. What good is life if it's half-lived? In the tradition of "Survivor," don't just survive, be fully alive!

Gay role

En route to Manila from Iloilo, I bumped into Luis Manzano at the airport. He is excited to shoot in New York with his mom Vilma Santos and John Lloyd Cruz. He and Lloydie will portray a gay couple.

Does he have any reservations about romantic scenes with Lloydie? "To make the story believable, we will definitely have a lot of emotional scenes as lovers," said Luis. "I am ready for anything the role requires of me. There are different levels of gayness. My role isn't the flamboyant type. A la 'Philadelphia' and 'Milk.' I am confident that it will all be done in good taste. It helps that Lloydie is a good actor and also a good friend." Goodness "GAYcious!"



Luis Manzano

"Fingerprint" was written by Robbie Nevil, the same guy behind The Pussycat Dolls' "When I Grow Up" and Jordin Sparks' "One Step at a Time," as well as three songs on the "High School Musical" soundtrack. He also recorded the hit tune "C'est La Vie" in 1987.

"We hope to have at least 10 songs in the new album," Charice said. "We're looking for ballads, R&B and upbeat numbers. I want most of the tracks to be original, with maybe just two covers."

Having her own signature song is important to her: "So that when people watch my concerts, they would get to hear my own music, not just cover versions of Whitney Houston and Celine Dion hits."

She also feels strongly about including a Filipino song in her US debut.

She said she got more nervous performing for fellow Filipinos in local shows compared to foreigners in gigs abroad.

Case in point: She confessed to having butterflies in her tummy prior to her latest free concert, a Women's Month celebration at the Shangri-La Plaza mall. "Filipinos are very picky," she said. "If you impress them, they will show their appreciation. If not, they will also show it!"

But seeing their faces light up is enough to inspire Charice.

"With every performance, here or abroad, I aim to make Filipinos proud," she said.

Lovers or friends?

Someone privy to Heart Evangelista's love life told me that she went out with her businessman ex-boyfriend. Are they on the verge of a reconciliation or are they just trying to make the switch from lovers to friends?

Guess list

•A singer has a pattern in her love life. She always gives her full emotional and financial investment to her boyfriends who take advantage of her kindness. "Parang replay lang ang mess that's happening now to her and her ex," says her close friend.

"In her previous relationship, she bought a property in Bora and put it in her name and her BF's name. When they split up, di na niya alam kung saan napunta ang papeles ng lupa." If loving those men are wrong, why does she still want to be a repeat offender?

•An actress got pissed at the audio man in her shooting so she slapped him. "Galit na galit siya kasi after her scene, she was informed na di nag sink in ang sound," said a crew member of the show. "So kailangan take two. Agad niyang hinanap ang audio man at sinampal at minura."

If only her harsh dialogue off-cam could also be put in mute mode. She has a reputation of shouting at her show's and movies' staff. If she doesn't shut up, she should be shut out from the TV/cinema scene.

range their own songs," Matias said.

And there are also fresh spins on Joel Navarro's "Suwerte, Suwerte Lang" and Gary Valenciano's "Heto Na Naman."

Matias said, "Sharon wants to make these old favorites sound new." (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*)

Sharon goes back to basics

Sharon Cuneta goes back to basics in two new albums she is set to launch under Sony-BMG. The first is "Children's Rhymes and Lullabies"; the second, a yet-untitled OPM collection.

Album producer Eloisa Matias said Cuneta first thought of a children's album when daughter Frankie was born nine years ago. Among the cuts are educational and playtime songs and lullabies.

An early favorite is a medley of

folk songs—"Pen-Pen de Sarapen," "Pakitong-Kitong," and "Paru-Parong Bukid."

In the OPM album, Cuneta worked with arranger-musicians like Jay Durias, Nyoy Volante and Marvin Querido.

"The idea is for the artists to rear-

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Deconstructing 'Nicole'

The second affidavit signed by "Nicole," the Filipina whose allegation of rape led to the conviction of American sailor Daniel Smith, is a sensational about-face. It has dismayed many among her support groups, and emboldened others who had always doubted her motives or were prepared to give the American the benefit of the doubt.

What the new affidavit does, in fact, is to raise reasonable doubt. It does this by locating the doubt squarely in Nicole's head. "I can't help but entertain doubts on whether the sequence of events in Subic in November of 2005 really occurred the way the court found them to have happened."

What is the purpose of this second affidavit? That is one thing we should all help determine. The answer may help us understand the legal purpose of this legal document—for that's what it is, principally. It is a lawyerly tactic, with lawyerly uses. It is possible to argue, for instance, that the statement was meant to be introduced during the appeals stage, perhaps to convince the appellate court to remand the trial back to the original court.

Or could it have simply been a quid pro quo—something demanded in exchange for Smith's release of the P100,000 in damages ordered by the Regional Trial Court of Makati City? If so, then the lawyer who prepared the second affidavit has much to answer for—for the P100,000 was part of the original judgment. Smith, contrary to the self-serving information included in the receipt, had no choice but to pay.

Of course, choice is precisely the issue in the now-raging controversy over Nicole's motives or designs, her sincerity or calculating duplicity, her courage or cowardice. (Take your pick.) Various people had chosen to invest all sorts of symbolic meaning in her, as rape victim; now we all find ourselves coming to terms with her as she really is.

She was the victim of government neglect. Almost from the start, the national government proved indifferent to a woman whose legal actions threatened to upset Philippine-American relations. Her mother, speaking after the new affidavit came out, added more details to this image, claiming that the family had asked Malacañang for support to get Nicole an Italian visa, and got exactly nothing.

She was the flirt who couldn't handle her drink, and got what she deserved. A closely related view: She was in it for the money, or the visa. From the start, many people looked askance at her allegation of rape, because she acted like a "party girl" who was "asking for it." The second affidavit, with its unusual reiteration of the many drinks she took, buttresses this view, even as it also reinforces the main finding of the trial court—that Nicole was too drunk to give her consent.

She was the Filipina who wanted to live the American dream. Many were aghast when they heard the news that, despite everything, Nicole had gone "for good" to the States, to be together with her (new) American boyfriend. How could she even think of living in the United States? This is the question that continues to unsettle many of us. The answer must be: Because she did not consider herself raped, or taken advantage of, by the United States—only by a single American.

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Yes and no

I spoke before a group of foreigners last week, and someone asked me in the open forum if I thought next year's elections were going to make things better for this country. I said yes and no.

The yes is patent. Elections next year—or at least a presidential election and not a parliamentary one which is the main object of Cha-cha (Charter change)—will write finish to Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. That is no mean change in itself. That is no mean source of grace, or blessing, or beneficence unto itself. Arroyo goes and this country will finally be able to breathe. Or the incidence of heart disease, hypertension and cancer will plummet overnight.

I remember again something the Malacañang bishops said when the faithful were demanding, on pain of becoming faithless, that they uphold the virtues of righteousness and call on their benefactor to step down for harboring pretty much all the vices of unrighteousness. One archbishop said, "Not all of this country's problems will be solved by GMA stepping down." I said then, and I say now, "True, but a great many of them freaking will."

It will certainly arrest the country's slide into a living nightmare, characterized by world-class corruption, world-class violence and a world-class system of justice where the guilty are rewarded and the innocent punished. Those are the three things we have succeeded in becoming globally known for. A person's health is not naturally going to improve having a nasty fish-bone stuck in his throat pulled out, but it is going to give him one hell of a glimpse of heaven.

This is one time I do not mind electioneering at this early date, such as a year or so before elections can ever be early in this country. I figure the more the "presidentiables," or wannabes, start apprising the world of their ambitions or delusions, the better the chances of elections pushing through. I figure the more the media start talking about their jockeying for position or public attention, the more the election fever they generate. I figure the more the bets for the presidential bets start stacking up, the more momentum they

spin, turning the elections into a whirlpool that sucks everything in its path. Hell hath no fury than Filipinos robbed of their biggest OTB.

But will the elections make this country better?

I don't know that elections in the past have, and I don't know that elections in the future will. But I do know, having lived through martial law, that elections, however the joke they often are in this country, are always better than no elections at all.

But there are elections and elections. Some offer the hope that things might turn out to be better. Most fill with the despair that they will only produce the respite that eventually gives way to, or even paves it for, the rise of another Marcos or GMA. There's the rub. Where we stand right now, unless something dramatic happens over the next few months, the 2010 elections bear only the promise of the second.

Look at the frontrunners as identified by Pulse Asia—Noli de Castro, Francis Escudero, Joseph Estrada, Manuel Villar. Had Malacañang paid Pulse Asia to rig its survey, it could not have obtained better results. The list offers an almost convincing argument for no elections. They make 2010 a showcase for horrendously diminished expectations. You look at the frontrunners and you ask yourself what in God's name they stand for. You look at them and you ask yourself who among them does not have fickle loyalties and even more fickle principles. You look at them and you ask yourself if they are not the people Alexander Hamilton had in mind when he said, "He who stands for nothing will fall for anything."

It's particularly dismaying in light of one thing. That is the potential of the elections to be writ in epic terms, in the same way that the American elections last November were so. The latter was not so much a choice between Barack



There's The Rub

By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Obama and John McCain as it was a choice between Barack Obama and George W. Bush. It was a choice between going forward or going backward, between freedom and repression, between hope and despair. Indeed, it was a choice, not unlike the snap elections of February 1986 in this country, between democracy and despotism, between decency and rottenness, between Good and Evil.

The Evil is there. How much more evil can you paint the person currently occupying the Palace by the River?

Or more to the point, how much lower can she—and her husband—sink? I would have thought that Evil almost by necessity forces its opposite to spring to life. I would have thought that Darkness almost by its built-in nature to self-destruct would summon Light to dispel it. Not so in this country. Or no longer so. Instead of Good, all we have are Lesser Evils. Instead of Light all we have is Semi-Dark. Instead of Cory and Obama, all we have are Noli, Chiz, Erap and Manny.

Chiz of course likes to wear the mantle, or exude the aura, of the Philippine Obama, but he misses the point. Obama is not about youth, he is about change. Obama is not about glibness, he is about eloquence. Obama is not about guile, he is about truth. In any case, how can Chiz represent himself as the other side of the collision of worlds, of the struggle between Light and Dark, of the battle between Good and Evil? A vote for him is not a vote for Good, it is a vote for Danding Cojuangco.

At least after the plagues and boils Dubya visited upon his country, there is an Obama Americans can look up to to deliver them out of the wilderness. At least after the blood and tears Macoy rained down upon his land, there was a Cory Filipinos could look up to to replenish that land and plant the seeds of a new life there.

What on earth have we got today?

A shot across the bow

Two developments came out of the blue last week, landing like a bombshell on frayed Philippine relations with the United States: the abandonment by Suzette "Nicole" Nicolas of her rape case against Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith; and the unexpected telephone call President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo received from US President Barack Obama.

On March 12, Nicole sent a shock wave when she signed an affidavit, saying she now had "doubts on whether the sequence of events in Subic last November 2005 really occurred the way the court found them to have happened." Her testimony during the trial in a Philippine court led to the conviction of Smith in December 2006 for raping Nicole. Prior to the release of her affidavit of March 12, she had flown to the United States to join her boyfriend, catching Philippine authorities flatfooted.

Her sudden departure left in doubt the outcome of the controversy over Smith's detention in the US Embassy, pending the decision of the Court of Appeals on the appeal by Smith, in what Philippine authorities claimed was a violation of the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) governing offenses committed by American troops stationed in the Philippines. Smith is being held at the embassy despite a Supreme Court ruling that he should be moved to a Philippine facility while awaiting the resolution of his appeal.

Nicole's departure paved the way for a possible dropping of the rape case. The holding of Smith at the US Embassy has been a festering irritant to Philippine-US relations over a sovereignty issue. Nicole's departure has poured cold water on this issue, undermining calls for the review or the abrogation of the VFA. The affidavit and the flight of Nicole have fueled suspicions about whether these were part of a deal struck between the Obama administration and President Arroyo not to rock troubled RP-US relations at a time when Obama faces aggressive actions by the Chinese

navy to assert China's hegemony over disputed territories in the South China Sea.

The turnabout of Nicole and the removal of the VFA from the hot plate of Philippine-US issues and the sudden call last Saturday by Obama to Ms. Arroyo reaffirming US commitment to the VFA have been seen as more than merely coincidental. Rather, the Obama call was seen either as a US signal to China that the White House was disturbed by the Chinese navy's saber-rattling in the South China Sea, or as a signal to President Arroyo and the Philippine Senate not to tinker with the VFA at a time of fresh Chinese military challenges in the South China Sea.

The call has not ended the Obama government's snub of the Arroyo regime. It is not a sign of approval of the controversial policies and programs of the Arroyo government—including the corruption scandals rocking it, and the still unabated extra-judicial killings of leftist activists. Obama's gestures of being more civil to Ms. Arroyo do not mean he will now turn a blind eye to these abuses and to moves initiated by her allies in Congress to change the Constitution to allow her to extend her hold on power beyond the end of her term in 2010 under probation by the Obama White House.

Obama's friendlier attitude toward the Arroyo administration reflects a pragmatic approach that has defined traditional US relations with the Philippines. Obama needs the VFA more than we need him. Obama is not in the mood to back corrupt and repressive regimes, in the manner that Ferdinand Marcos caused President Reagan to turn a blind eye to Marcos' abuses, on account of the US bases in the Philippines.

Under Obama, the US needs the VFA as the back-



Analysis

By AMANDO DORONILA
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

bone of the rapid deployment of its forces to counter the threats of North Korea's nuclear weapons buildup in East Asia, Iran's nuclear weapons' program in the Persian Gulf and China's aggressive naval activity in the South China Sea. Although there are no longer fixed US bases after the termination of the bases agreement in the 1990s, the VFA serves as the umbrella for the presence of US forces participating in joint military exercises with Philippine forces in the Philippines, on temporary arrangements. These temporary forces are rotated regularly and their facilities, including warships and aircraft, are mobile and can be deployed quickly to trouble spots in East Asia and the Persian Gulf. The mobility of these forces for rapid deployment is what Obama needs to reassert US military power on a global scale, as the lone superpower.

The maneuvers of the Chinese navy, which had a run-in two weeks ago with a US naval vessel surveying for submarine activity in the South China Sea, woke Obama up to the fact that the VFA with the Philippines still existed. Prior to this incident, Obama, relatively inexperienced in foreign policy matters, suffered amnesia over the existence of the network of US security relations with the Philippines.

Filipino national security officials tend to believe that the dispatch of China's "most modern patrol ship" to the South China Sea was triggered by the passage of the Baselines Law. The Chinese won't waste fuel for their ship to issue a warning to the Philippines.

What prompted the show of force was the naval standoff involving the US ship *Impeccable*. The Chinese order to the US ship to leave was a shot across the bow. It was intended for Obama. It made Obama realize he needed the Filipinos and our VFA.

Maharlika-Samu't Sari



BIRTHDAY GIRL

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Areeza Anda blows the birthday cake's candle as her parents and guests watch during her 3rd birthday party held at the Hafa Adai Beach Hotel's Tropicana Restaurant last March 7.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Areeza Anda smiles as she prepares to blow the candle on her birthday cake.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Areeza Anda poses with parents Art and Liza during her 3rd birthday party held recently at Tropicana Restaurant.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Areeza Anda (middle) poses with friends and guests—Kaila and Alou—during her birthday party at the Hafa Adai Beach Hotel's Tropicana Restaurant.



EILEEN AND FRIENDS

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Eileen I. Duran poses with friends during a singing competition held at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino.



BIRTHDAY GET-TOGETHER

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Belated happy birthday to Danny Bacalso, shown here holding a 10-lb mahi-mahi fish, who celebrated his birthday last Sunday, March 15, 2009, at his farmhouse in As Lito. Greetings coming from his compare Jun L. Seated from left, Arnel, Jun Cuaresma and Alvin. Standing from left, Eduard, Joe, celebrant Danny, Joseph, Mar, and Mel.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
The celebrant Danny Bacalso, standing second from left, together with his close friends.



WINNERS ALL

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Third to fifth grade students of Grace Christian Academy display the medals and ribbons they won in the regional Primary Grade Forensic Conference on March 7, 2009 at Marianas High School.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Grace Christian Academy students from Kindergarten to 2nd Grade show off their medals and ribbons after participating in the regional Primary Grade Forensic Conference on March 7, 2009 at Marianas High School.

Young Style

Ever wondered if yawning is contagious?

By VALERIE STRAUSS
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Let's start at the beginning.

Who yawns?

Everybody. Not just people, but cats, dogs and fish do, too!

What is a yawn?

It is an involuntary action during which you open your mouth and breathe deeply for, on average, six seconds. "Involuntary" means you don't think about doing it; you just do it.

Why do we yawn?

Scientists aren't really cer-

tain what triggers a yawn. They aren't even sure what part of the brain causes yawning.

We know that people yawn when they are tired or bored, but they also yawn when they aren't. In fact, athletes sometimes yawn before competition,

Yawn Fact

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

When an animal yawns, it's sometimes a warning sign. For example, guinea pigs yawn when angry, showing off their sharp teeth.

when they are the opposite of tired and bored. Babies in the womb yawn, too.

One theory is that yawning is a way for the body to become more alert by taking in more oxygen. A yawn increases the heart rate, forces carbon dioxide out of the lungs and bloodstream, and brings oxygen to the brain.

But one study showed that volunteers given a lot of oxygen did not yawn any less than before, and those exposed to a lot of carbon dioxide did not yawn more.

Another theory is that human ancestors used yawning as a form of communication and that the action has remained with us. Baboons living in groups, in

fact, signal that it is time to go to sleep by yawning a lot.

Do we yawn when we see someone else yawn?

Scientists say yes, but — you guessed it—they aren't sure why.

It might be the power of suggestion. In one study, subjects were more than twice as likely to yawn while watching a series of yawns as while watching a series of smiles.

Yawns, like every human action, originate in the brain; and scientists are

still unlocking the mysteries of how the brain works.

There is still a lot that scientists have yet to figure out, even something as seemingly simple as why our eyes sometimes twitch. Or why we hiccup.

So, did you read this entire article without yawning? (We bet not!)



Death and Funeral Announcement Romeo C. Pagapular

was born to life on January 23, 1939
and was called to his eternal rest
on March 19, 2009

Wife: Cecilia G. Pagapular

Children:

Rocel "Bong" Pagapular & Loida Pagapular (*Ronald Sean and Robby*)
Catherine Pagapular & Rick Henderson (*Spencer and Zivon*)
Kristie Marie Pagapular & Romeo Barcelon (*Kaetia Celeen, Kristopher, Dominic*)
Randy Pagapular
Charlene P. Valle & Amadel Valle
Kathy Lalaine Pagapular & Brad Ruszala

And Survived by:

Lovelle Lea D'lonsod (niece)
Gregory Ganzan (Brother-in-law)
Jean D'lonsod (Sister-in-law)

Parents: †Vicente Pagapular & Julieta Pagapular

Brothers & Sisters:

Nicandro & Pundadura Pagapular
Leliosa P. Bajao
Cynthia & Jovito Espiritu
†Pepito & Leticia Pagapular
Janita & Martin Badiang
Nonette & Rolly Pascual

Parents-in-law: †Sinecio Ganzan & †Mercedes Ganzan

Nightly Rosary is being said at 7:00 p.m. at Kristo Rai Church.

On Wednesday, March 25, 2009, his remains will be escorted at 7:30 a.m. from Nuestra Señora Dela Paz Memorial Chapel, Cabrera Center to Mt. Carmel Cathedral for final viewing and last respects. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m. Interment Service will follow at Chalan Kanoa Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers.

The Family

For college hoops fans, it's let the games begin!

By FRED BOWEN
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

It's that time of year again: March Madness. The men's and women's college basketball championships began Thursday, and that means 129 teams will play 127 games in the next three weeks to crown two national champions.

It's heaven for the serious hoops fan.

But kids can't watch all those games. If they did, they wouldn't have time to go to

school, play their own sports or do their homework. So here are some ideas on how to enjoy the fun without watching every game.

Play a family tournament: My family runs its own NCAA tournament by picking teams during March Madness. We usually play our game with the men's bracket, but you can do it with the women's tournament, too.

Here's how we play. Each of us takes a turn picking a team,

with the youngest picking first, the next youngest second and so on. Once a team is picked, no one else can take that team. We continue picking teams in that order until everyone has picked six teams. One special rule: Each player has to have at least one team (an "upset pick") whose seed, or rank, is between

year. But some made it. So root for them.

The American University men's team had a great season, winning the Patriot League regular season championship and tournament. But the Eagles probably won't last long in the NCAA tourney. They play the powerful Villanova Wildcats in

Round One. The Wildcats should feast on the AU Eagles.

The Washington-area team with the best chance to win it all is the Maryland women's

team. The Terps have a terrific record (28 wins and 4 losses), won the ACC tournament and are led by two standout seniors, guard Kristi Toliver and forward Marissa Coleman. And the Terps play their first two tournament games on their home court.

So I'm picking the Maryland women to make it to the Final Four. And that will make March Madness lots of fun this year.

Bowen is an author of sports novels for kids.

College Basketball Tournament Fact

(c) 2009, The Washington Post

With 11 titles, UCLA has won more Division I basketball championships than any other college or university since March Madness began in 1939.

9 and 16. That way people can't pick only the favorites to win the tournament.

We post our lists of six teams on the refrigerator door. Every time a team on someone's list wins a game, we put a check beside the team's name. The person whose teams win the most games is the champ and gets to choose his or her favorite meal for dinner after the tournament.

Root for the home teams: Lots of Washington-area teams missed the tournaments this

RIDDLE CARD


1. When was beef the highest?

2. What does the cartoonist like to draw best?

3. When is a doctor most annoyed?

4. Which burns longer, a wax candle or a tallow candle?

5. What can turn without ever moving?




Answers: 1. When the cow jumped over the moon; they both burn shorter; 5. Milk; it can turn sour.

2. His salary; 3. When he's out of patients; 4. Neither; 5. When the cow jumped over the moon.

PITCH AND SPELL!

Using the baseballs, knock down one pin at a time so that a new word is spelled out on the remaining pins.



Answer: One solution is: Hearth, heart, heat, eat, at, a.

PUZZLERS, START YOUR ENGINES!

Pictured below are two puzzle grids for you to fill in. Hints are given for each word. The words in Grid A contain the same letters as the corresponding words in Grid B.

GRID A

D			
R			
A			
G			

GRID B

S			
T			
E			
R			

1. Where bears live.

2. Cost per item.

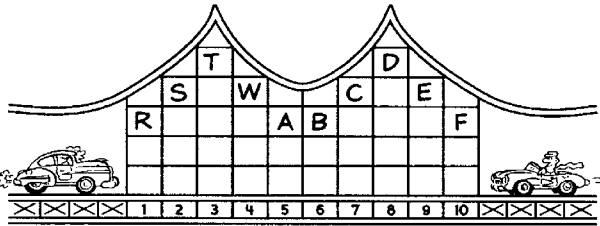
3. Dull pain.

4. Clothing or accessories.

Answers: 1. Dens-send; 2. Rate-tear; 3. Ache-each; 4. Gear-rage.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



A WORD BRIDGE

The bridge above contains 10 supporting words. We give you the first letter of each word, plus plenty of hints.

1. A type of saw.

2. A type of paper.

3. Something forbidden.

4. To become smaller.

5. To feel poorly.

6. A type of window.

7. Used in basket-making.

8. Found in history books.

9. Speaks all languages.

10. A bad thing to do.

Answers: 1. Rip (ripsaw); 2. Sand (sandpaper); 3. Taboo; 4. Wane; 5. All; 6. Bay; 7. Cane; 8. Dates; 9. Echo; 10. Fib.

Illustrated by David Coulson

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

- It was Scott Adams, best known as the creator of the “Dilbert” comic strip, who made the following observation: “Give a man a fish, and you’ll feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, and he’ll buy a funny hat. Talk to a hungry man about fish, and you’re a consultant.”
- Many people believe that 24-karat gold is pure, but that’s not true—it has a small amount of copper blended with the gold. The reason is practical: Pure gold is so soft that if you were to find an absolutely pure sample, you would be able to mold it with your bare hands.
- You may be surprised to learn that the third president of the United States, Thomas Jefferson, was more than a revolutionary leader and politician—he was also an inventor. One of his creations was the dumbwaiter.
- Do you suffer from misoneism? Quite a few people these days seem to. It’s a hatred or fear of change or innovation.
- If you’ve got extra money on your hands—a lot of extra money!—the next time you’re updating your wardrobe, you might take a look at Escada’s couture line of jeans, which, with prices starting at \$7,500, is the most expensive in the world.
- During the Revolutionary War, the British hired mercenary Hessian soldiers to fight for them against the colonists. The reward for putting life and limb at risk for a cause not theirs? A grand total of 25 cents per day.
- Attention fisherfolk: If you happen to catch and gut the species known as the garfish, you’ll find green bones inside it.

Thought for the Day: “The average, healthy, well-adjusted adult gets up at seven-thirty in the morning feeling just plain terrible.”—Jean Kerr

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Reader: don't allow house pets to breed

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: It never seems to amaze me. I'm talking about the people who do not get their critters fixed. I know some very educated people whose pets have litter after litter. What are they thinking? Where and when will it end?

It is never right or a good thing to allow your critters to have a litter. Never! Take a look at our overcrowded animal shelters. It just breaks my heart at the number of animals they have to put down.

These “educated” people tell me, “Oh, I find homes for all my babies.” That’s beside the point! If you don’t have babies to give away for free, then people will have to adopt a critter from the shelter that is fixed and won’t reproduce any more unwanted and unloved animals. Get all your pets fixed!

If you can’t afford to get them fixed, find a program that will help you pay for it or take them to your local shelter. Please!—Dee in Palmyra, N.Y.

DEAR DEE: Thank you for making an important point so forcefully. Litters of puppies and kittens are very cute, but they add to an already huge population of dogs and cats, most of which are never adopted and end up in shelters, where they’re often euthanized. Unless you are an AKC-certified, professional breeder, you have no business allowing your pets to procreate.

I have heard many excuses from pet owners as to why they don’t spay or neuter. “Oh, it would be cruel.” “Oh, my Maximilian would lose his confident personality if he were neutered.” And of course, “My pet is well-behaved and indoors most of the time, so she’ll never get pregnant.”

Don’t let yourself be swayed by these fantasies. Learn the facts about spaying and neutering.

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw’s Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to pawscorner@hotmail.com.

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Catch March winds with a minikite

Spring’s official arrival this week signals longer days, outdoor activities and warmer weather. But here in Minnesota, we know that even if the calendar says spring, it’s probably not! Winter’s snow will cover the landscape and kids will stand at the bus stop in freezing temperatures a while longer.

Although we might not walk on solid ground yet, like all parents, we’re anxious to get kids outside to catch March winds and fly kites. That’s exactly what the Elsbernd and Erlandson families did with their five kids under 5 years old on a recent 15-degree Sunday afternoon.

No matter that they had to run with their kites on a big, frozen city lake. Dressed in snowsuits, mittens and hats, the thrill of flying kites and the joy of making family memories is always the same.

Drink in spring’s fresh air whether on ice or solid ground, and set aside a weekend afternoon to fly kites together. Construct a colorful purchased kite and then make easy-to-use minikites for preschoolers using simple paper lunch bags.

Here’s how to make a nifty paper-bag minikite:

Decorate a clean paper lunch bag. Use watercolors, poster paint or markers. Add your favorite stickers or design your own. To make stickers, draw shapes on colorful adhesive shelf paper. Cut out the shapes, peel off the backing and arrange stickers on the bag.

Cut four 16-inch streamers or ribbons. Glue or tape them to the bottom corners of the bag.


For a handle, cut a 20-inch to 30-inch length of string. Place the two ends of the string inside the bag, about 1-inch down from the edge on each of the side creases and attach firmly with masking tape.

When the kite is made, go outside and run with the kite against the wind. As the

Donna's Day

Creative family fun

by Donna Erickson



air fills the bag, the kite stays aloft behind your child.

Tip: If your child celebrates an early spring birthday, making minikites is a fun activity for young party guests. The children will enjoy creating the kites as they arrive at the party—a good mixer for those kids meeting for the first time. After presents and treats, let the wigglers out to fly the minikites outdoors.

Donna Erickson’s award-winning television series “Donna’s Day” airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna’s e-newsletter.

(c) 2009 Donna Erickson

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MAGIC MAZE • GORGES

GNKIFCNZWCURPMJ

HITAMOKEHCZXUSQ

NLJGTECERZXEVTR

PNLSNODREVJNHEC

AYLLWDIVDRTIRPN

LAIRAMASRKCRDIG

GEIRONBRIDGECEBR

ZXWUSRNPKUHNNO

MLJIGOE EEBNTYID

BAYXVTCARATACWP

UTSAQPONLKLKPJH

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Avon

Bued

Cataract

Cheddar

Galston

Ironbridge

Katherine

Komati

Lanner

Pankisi

Pine Creek

Red River

Royal

Samaria

Verdon

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GO FIGURE!

by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

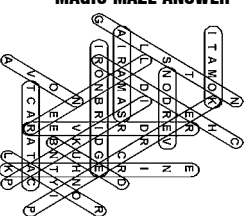
★ Moderate ★★ Difficult

★★★ GO FIGURE!

1 2 3 4 5 5 6 7 9

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MAGIC MAZE ANSWER

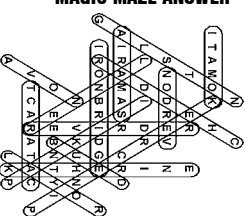


GORGES

GO FIGURE ANSWER

5	24	25
3	4	17
6	2	7
13	7	1

MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GORGES

GO FIGURE ANSWER

5	24	25
3	4	17
6	2	7
13	7	1

Life & Style



President Barack Obama, left, appears on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno in Burbank, Calif. Thursday, March 19, 2009.

'Tonight' is friendly turf for President Obama

UNIVERSAL CITY, Calif. (AP)—If TV talk shows have become a battleground where hosts and newsmakers duke it out, Jay Leno and President Barack Obama didn't get the message.

"Mr. President, I must say this has been one of the best nights of my life," a beaming Leno announced at the end of Obama's visit Thursday to the "Tonight" show.

Leno queried Obama about difficult issues—including AIG's executive bonuses and criticism of Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner—but with minor exception allowed the president to answer without challenge.

It was a sharp contrast to the recent high drama of CNBC host Jim Cramer's painful woodshed appearance on Jon Stewart's show or David Letterman's roasting of John Mc-

Cain during the presidential campaign.

Of course, a sitting U.S. president is a different animal, and Obama was the first to visit "Tonight." (He'd already appeared twice as a candidate.)

"I'm excited, I'm honored to introduce my next guest, the 44th president of the United States, Barack Obama," Leno said as his studio band played "Hail to the Chief."

Obama might have sensed from the outset it would not be a grueling exercise. Leno asked if it was fair to be "judged so quickly" after less than two months in office.

"I welcome the challenge," Obama said. "In Washington, it's a little bit like 'American Idol,' but everybody is Simon Cowell. Everybody's got an opinion."

The tone turned serious when the economic crisis was the

topic, but Leno wasn't going to make the president sweat.

Obama had appeared "angry" and "stunned" about the AIG bonuses, Leno observed.

"Stunned is the word," Obama replied, then launched into a lengthy, wonkish description of how the insurance giant foundered and why the company bonuses symbolize the larger issue of Wall Street's "attitude of entitlement."

If Leno had a bone to pick, it was with federal efforts to tax the AIG bonuses out of existence.

"If the government decides they don't like a guy, all of a sudden, 'Hey, we're gonna tax you,'" the talk show host said.

He did tweak Obama at one point, after bringing up criticisms of Geithner. As Obama defended the treasury secretary for taking the right steps against a host of problems, Leno joked, "I love that it's all his problem."

Autopsy: Richardson died from bleeding in brain

NEW YORK (AP)—Actress Natasha Richardson died from bleeding in her skull caused by the fall she took on a ski slope, an autopsy found Thursday. The medical examiner ruled her death an accident, and doctors said she might have survived had she received immediate treatment.

Richardson suffered from an epidural hematoma, which causes bleeding between the skull and the brain's covering, said Ellen Borakove, a spokeswoman for the New York City medical examiner's office.

Such bleeding is often

caused by a skull fracture, and it can quickly produce a blood clot that puts pressure on the brain. That pressure can force the brain downward, pressing on the brain stem that controls breathing and other vital functions.

Patients with such an injury often feel fine immediately after being hurt because symptoms from the bleeding may take time to emerge.

"This is a very treatable condition if you're aware of what the problem is and the patient is quickly transferred to a hospital," said Dr. Keith Siller of

New York University Langone Medical Center. "But there is very little time to correct this."

To prevent coma or death, surgeons frequently cut off part of the skull to give the brain room to swell.

"Once you have more swelling, it causes more trauma which causes more swelling," said Dr. Edward Aulisi, neurosurgery chief at Washington Hospital Center in the nation's capital. "It's a vicious cycle because everything's inside a closed space."

Richardson, 45, died Wednesday at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan after falling at the Mont Tremblant resort in Quebec on Monday. Details of her treatment have not been disclosed.



Richardson

Jury rules against South Korean star for \$8M

HONOLULU (AP)—South Korean pop star and actor Rain and his managers on Thursday were ordered to pay a Hawaii promoter more than \$8 million in damages for canceling a 2007 concert in Honolulu.

A federal jury found Rain, his agency JYP Entertainment Co. and two South Korean promotion companies breached a contract to perform and defrauded Click Entertainment Inc.

Nearly \$5 million was for punitive damages, with Rain and JYP each ordered to pay \$2.4 million. An additional \$1 million was awarded for damages related to the fraud and \$2,286,000 was given for breach of contract.

"That was the best we certainly could've hoped for under the circumstances," Click attorney Eric Seitz said. "I hope they send a message that people can't do the kind of things that



AP

South Korean pop star and actor Rain, 26, flashes a Hawaiian "shaka" sign as he arrives at federal court, Monday, March 16, 2009, in Honolulu.

this entertainer and his agents did. I think he received very bad advice. ... The decisions here were just horrible."

The judgment is expected to

trigger several lawsuits across the United States where the star abruptly canceled shows two years ago. A similar lawsuit was recently filed in Los Angeles, where Rain's concert at the Staples Center was scratched a couple hours before show time.

"We're obviously very disappointed with the jury's decision in this matter," Rain's lead lawyer, Jon Crocker, said. "We maintain our position that both JYP and Rain fulfilled all their obligations with regard to the Hawaii performance. We will continue to vigorously defend them, wherever these promoters bring these baseless lawsuits."

Rain's concert was canceled just days before the scheduled June 15, 2007, event at Aloha Stadium, where tickets were sold for as much as \$300 each. It was supposed to be the first stop on the "Rain's Coming" U.S. tour.

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NOW SHOWING



Knowing

Friday 4:10 7:10 9:30
 Saturday 1:15 4:10 7:10 9:30
 Sunday 1:15 4:10 7:10
 Mon and Tues 4:10 7:10

Nicolas Cage, Rose Byrne
 Action, Thriller • Rated PG 13

Synopsis

In 1958, as part of the dedication ceremony for a new elementary school, a group of students is asked to draw pictures to be stored in a time capsule. But one mysterious girl fills her sheet of paper with rows of apparently random numbers instead. Fifty years later, a new generation of students examines the capsule's contents and the girl's cryptic message ends up in the hands of young Caleb Koestler.



When I Met You

Friday 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Saturday 1:30 4:25 7:20 9:50
 Sunday 1:30 4:25 7:20
 Mon and Tues 4:25 7:20

KC Concepcion, Richard Gutierrez
 Romance, Drama • Rated NR

Synopsis

Jenny, a small promodizer, hitches a ride on a seaplane with struggling pilot, Benjie, to attend a wedding in Palawan... Jenny's boyfriend Albert and Benjie's fiancée, Tracy, are both friends with the bride and the two thought it would be great for their respective partners, Jenny and Benjie, to join them in Palawan. On the way to the wedding, Benjie and Jenny find themselves not getting along.



Race To Witch Mountain

Friday 4:15 7:30 9:40
 Saturday 1:10 4:15 7:30 9:40
 Sunday 1:10 4:15 7:30
 Mon and Tues 4:15 7:30

Dwayne Johnson, Ciarán Hinds
 Action, Adventure • Rated PG

Synopsis

For years, stories have circulated about a secret place in the middle of the Nevada desert, known for unexplained phenomena and strange sightings. It is called Witch Mountain, and when a Las Vegas cab driver finds two teens with supernatural powers in his cab, he suddenly finds himself in the middle of an adventure he can't explain.



The Last House On The Left

Friday 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Saturday 1:25 4:30 7:15 9:55
 Sunday 1:25 4:30 7:15
 Mon and Tues 4:30 7:15

Garret Dillahunt, Rhys Corio
 Horror • Rated R

Synopsis

For years, stories have circulated about a secret place in the middle of the Nevada desert, known for unexplained phenomena and strange sightings. It is called Witch Mountain, and when a Las Vegas cab driver finds two teens with supernatural powers in his cab, he suddenly finds himself in the middle of an adventure he can't explain.



Watchmen

Friday 4:00 7:05 10:15
 Saturday 1:00 4:00 7:05 10:15
 Sunday 1:00 4:00 7:05
 Mon and Tues 4:00 7:05

Malin Akerman, Billy Crudup
 Action, Adventure • Rated R



The Uninvited

Friday 4:05 7:25 9:35
 Saturday 1:20 4:05 7:25 9:35
 Sunday 1:20 4:05 7:25
 Mon and Tues 4:05 7:25

Elizabeth Banks, David Strathairn
 Horror, Remake • Rated PG 13

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PSA re-enacts details from alleged Rihanna beating

NEW YORK (AP)—The alleged beating of Rihanna has inspired an online public service announcement about dating violence.

A new video by the teen organization DoSomething.org features actors recreating the pop star's grim, highly publicized confrontation with her boyfriend, singer Chris Brown.

A young man and woman re-enact details from a Los Angeles police affidavit alleging that on Feb. 8, Brown punched, bit and choked Rihanna until she nearly lost consciousness.

A narrator describes the scene in a deadpan voice.

"We didn't want to be overdramatic," said Nancy Lublin, chief executive officer of DoSomething.org. "Our goal was not to shoot a Lifetime TV movie. ... There was no need to sensationalize things. It was bad enough."

The brief clip can be viewed on YouTube. It closes with the statistic that one in three teenagers is abused in a relationship, and promotes free bracelets—one blue, two black—that spread awareness about dating abuse.

Lublin said the goal is to make people think and change their behavior. The organization used white actors on purpose to shift the conversation away from the celebrity singers.

"The public is very focused right now on Chris and Rihanna," she said. "I think people need to realize that this is an issue that



AP
In this Dec. 12, 2008 file photo, singer Rihanna poses in the press room at the Z100 Jingle Ball concert at Madison Square Garden in New York.

goes beyond those particular people, and it affects everybody of every race. And so we wanted

this to not be an exact re-enactment. We wanted instead to say: Could this be you?"

Pixar's 'Up' to open 62nd Cannes Film fest

PARIS (AP)—This year's Cannes Film Festival will have an animated opening.

The festival's opening-night film will be "Up," a 3-D feature from hit-making studio Pixar, organizers announced Thursday.

The movie is a comedy adventure about a 78-year-old man, voiced by Ed Asner, who rigs helium balloons to his house and flies to South America.

It marks Cannes' return to a populist curtain raiser after last year's bleak opener, "Blindness."

"Up" is the first animated film chosen to open the world's most prestigious film festival. Several animated features have found favor at Cannes in the past, including "Persepolis" in 2007 and last year's "Waltz With Bashir."

The festival said it had not decided whether "Up" would be among the films competing for the festival's prizes.

Pixar and its parent studio, the Walt Disney Co., will be hoping "Up" repeats the critical and commercial success of films like "Toy Story," "The Incredibles" and "WALL-E." After its world premiere at Cannes on May 13, it will open in the United States on May 29.

The Cannes Film Festival runs from May 13 to 24. The full lineup is due to be announced on April 23.

'American Idol' contestants arrive in Detroit

DETROIT (AP)—The road to potential stardom for "American Idol" finalists led them to Motown's famed Hitsville USA.

The contestants on the popular Fox singing competition came to Studio A—the room at the Motown Historical Museum that once served as Motown Records hit-making factory. They worked with label founder Berry Gordy Jr. and singer Smokey Robinson on the Motown classics, and to film segments that will air on the show next Wednesday.

Among the hopefuls was

Michigan native Matt Giraud, a 23-year-old dueling piano player from Kalamazoo.

The set was closed to the media and public, but the contestants and Motown legends greeted fans and reporters before and after the sessions on the front lawn of the former studio on West Grand Boulevard. The building was a 24-hour-a-day music mill that churned out songs between 1959 and 1972 by Smokey Robinson and the Miracles, the Temptations, Four Tops, Stevie Wonder, The Supremes, the Jackson 5 and many others.

LA police cite Rihanna's driver: no front plate

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Los Angeles police put the brakes on a speedy getaway by Rihanna from a trendy Hollywood nightclub.

Los Angeles police say they stopped Rihanna's sport utility vehicle early Thursday on Hollywood Boulevard after noticing it didn't have a front license plate. A department spokeswoman confirmed Rihanna was inside, but did not have details on the citation issued to her driver.

Video shot by celebrity Web site TMZ showed an officer giving the driver a ticket.

The site also posted video of "Umbrella" singer coming in and out of the trendy Les Deux nightclub. The SUV is seen speeding away from the club, and later at the traffic stop. Paparazzi had assembled around the vehicle both times.

The videos also show Rihanna wasn't sporting sunglasses, which she had been shown wearing in several photographs taken in Los Angeles and New York since boyfriend Chris Brown allegedly beat her in February.

Teen daughter's pregnancy is cause for joy in mother's eyes

By **ABIGAIL VAN BUREN**
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

DEAR ABBY: My daughter, "Heidi," is 17 and pregnant. She is going to an alternative high school and doing well. My daughter is proactive about her pregnancy and excited about the new baby. This will be my first grandchild, and I am excited too.

My problem is, when I express my joy, others act like I am crazy for being happy. At a baptism in church, I told my husband how happy I will be when our grandson is baptized and that I can't wait until he's born. He responded that he is not excited at all because of the expense and upheaval this new addition will cause.

I know there will be hardships with a new baby. We don't have much room in our house, and a new member will bring some burden. I do not have my head in the clouds—but when I see the ultrasound image and hear that heartbeat, I am filled with joy.

Am I wrong to be happy? And if not, what can I say to people who tell me I am?

PROUD ALMOST-GRANDMA

DEAR ALMOST: You are entitled to your happiness. However, please understand that unwed teen mothers and their children can face challenges, and this may be what people are alluding to when they seem to question your joy.

Frankly, I am troubled by the fact that nowhere in your letter have you mentioned how your daughter plans to raise her son, how she will provide for him, whether she plans to complete her education, what the involvement of the baby's father will be emotionally and financially, or whether she will need aid from the state. Nor have you mentioned what the impact of the new arrival will have on your marriage.

That's why, although your heart is filled with joy, you need to look ahead with your eyes wide open—and that's what I am advising.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am almost 40 and single—no children. My friend, "Amanda," is in her 20s. She has two beautiful children, ages 6 and 2, and spoils them with an overabundance of toys and by giving them whatever they want.

I wouldn't interfere, but "giving them what they want" includes allowing them to ride in her vehicle without wearing a safety belt or child restraints.

I love Amanda and her children dearly. They wear their safety belts when they are with me. I'm afraid their mother will get into an accident and one of the children will be severely injured or die.

How can I convince Amanda to keep her children safely restrained when traveling without coming across as a "know-it-all"? I don't want to alienate her, but I want her kids to be safe.

CARING FRIEND, MOBERLY, MO.

DEAR CARING FRIEND: Tell her exactly what you have told me. I thought that by now all states had seatbelt and child safety laws in place. Contact the Department of Motor Vehicles and find out if yours is one of them.

Amanda may be a loving and generous mother, but in my opinion, she is guilty of child endangerment. There are worse things than hearing a child protest being buckled in. One of them is losing a child, or having him or her maimed for life because of parental negligence.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For an excellent guide to becoming a better conversationalist and a more sociable person, order "How to Be Popular." Send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Popularity Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

'60 Minutes' creator Hewitt diagnosed with cancer

NEW YORK (AP)—Don Hewitt, the legendary mastermind of CBS News' "60 Minutes," is battling pancreatic cancer. "60 Minutes" spokesman Kevin Tedesco said Thursday that the 86-year-old Hewitt has been diagnosed with a small, contained tumor. Doctors will evaluate the cancer to determine a course of treatment. Hewitt was already a veteran CBS Newsman in 1968 when he created "60 Minutes," pioneering the TV newsmagazine format. He served as executive producer of the program until his retirement in 2004.

Former "Soul Train" host gets probation

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Don Cornelius has been sentenced to three years' probation after pleading no contest to misdemeanor spousal battery. Court records show Cornelius' attorney entered the plea on the "Soul Train" creator's behalf on Wednesday. Cornelius was charged in November with spousal battery, assault with a deadly weapon and dissuading a witness from making a police report,

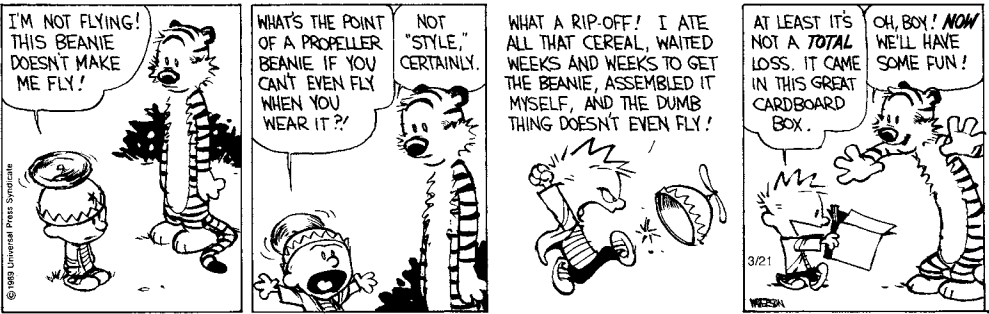
all misdemeanors. The 72-year-old was arrested a month earlier after police were called to his Hollywood Hills home following a report of domestic dispute. Records indicate the other charges were dismissed as part of Cornelius' plea agreement. He was ordered not to use threats or force against anyone, including his wife Victoria, and must attend a yearlong domestic violence course.

Springsteen fans get a 2nd chance at NJ concerts

TRENTON, N.J. (AP)—Bruce Springsteen fans who complained about how Ticketmaster handled online sales for New Jersey concerts are getting a second chance for seats. A settlement announced Thursday calls for a drawing to be held for more than 1,800 people on March 31. They can buy tickets for either the May 21 or May 23 show at the Izod Center. The state says 1,000 tickets are available for the drawing for each show. Ticketmaster's Web site had directed buyers to a subsidiary that charged up to 50 times the face value. Under the settlement, Ticketmaster agreed to change its online sales process.

Pastimes

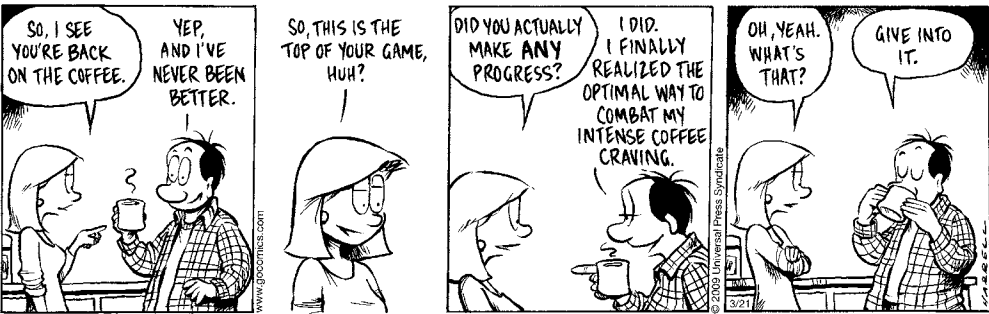
Calvin and Hobbes



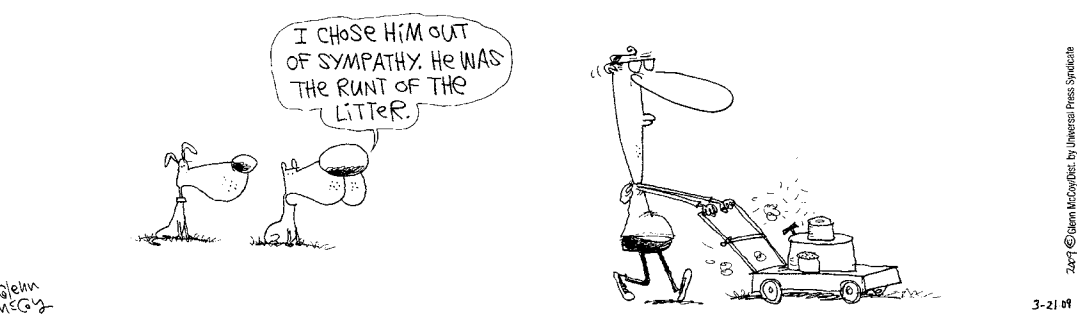
Garfield®



Adam@home



The Duplex



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Cage component

4 Alger's "before"

8 Poker variety

12 Com-motion

13 Egress

14 Paddock parent

15 Vast expanse

16 Muck and —

17 Pond organism

18 Essential ingre-dient

21 Tractor-trailer

22 Smack

23 Access the Web

26 Founda-tion

27 Handle clumsily

30 Act the robot

31 Barbie's cohort

32 November responsi-bility

DOWN

1 Grate

2 Con-cept

3 Piglet's papa

4 Go nowhere

5 Down-sizing

6 Encircle

7 King or Crane

8 Intelli-gent

9 Body powder

10 Desire

11 Trans-action

19 Not avoirdupois

20 Succor

23 Sodom evacuee

24 Kyoto cummer-bund

25 "Imagine that!"

26 Plead

27 D.C. figure

28 Chow-d down

29 Symbol of intrigue

31 Realm

32 Kill bill?

34 Feathery accessory

35 Kine

36 Flock in flight

37 Tinsel-town bestowal

38 Space-craft com-partments

39 Help hoods

40 Pop choice

41 Modern-day money

42 Got up

43 "My Name Is —"

44 Read briefly

Solution time: 27 mins.

Yesterday's answer 3-21

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mat-thew Broderick, 47; Rosie O'Donnell, 47; Gary Oldman, 51; Timothy Dalton, 63

Happy Birthday: Balance your time so you can take care of all your needs without feeling pres-sure. It's stress you must eliminate. Worrying is a waste of time and will compromise your ability to make good choices. The more in sync you are with what's going on around you, the more peo-ple will want to pitch in and help you out. Your numbers are 4, 15, 17, 23, 31, 38, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Doors will open if you push a little harder. You will be remembered by someone with whom you have dealt in the past. You can recoup some of your past losses by revamping and incorporat-ing old ideas. ★★★★★

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Don't be too sure of things. You may be disap-pointed by someone's last-minute deci-sion. Protect your assets and your position by staying in the loop, contributing all you can and being diligent about completion. ★★

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): The more considerate you are of others, the better, but don't let anyone take advantage of your generosity and fair play. Balance work and pleasure but don't mix them. Make travel plans to hook up with someone from your past. ★★★★★

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You have to put more time and effort into your fu-ture. Your plans should be looked at and revised if they aren't working for you. A change in your vocation may be in order but don't leap

before you have somewhere to go. ★★★

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Romance should be on your agenda. A trip with someone you care about or even spending time alone and discussing your plans for the future will build a better relationship. If you are single, get involved in entertaining events that allow you to mingle and meet new people. ★★★

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Invest in your looks, your skills or anything else that will help get you ahead personally, financially and professionally. Don't let a change at home get you down. Chances are good that it was long over-due and will make your life easier. ★★★

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Focus on having fun. Social events will lead to a better relationship with your friends or lover and will help you meet someone special if you happen to be single. ★★★★★

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Don't give in to anyone who is being too demand-ing, trying to talk you out of your cash or force a deal on you. It's important to protect your interests as well as your heart. You call the shots and make the moves. ★★

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Focus on work not personal matters that cannot be rectified. Make a motion to move on if you find that someone is using you to get to someone else. Stick close to the people you know you can trust. ★★★

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Some-times you have to look back in order to move forward. Realizing what you have

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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accomplished will make what you have ahead of you that much easier. The changes you make now may surprise some of your colleagues and friends. ★★★

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Refrain from being overindulgent or getting in-volved with friends who are. You must keep a clear head. If there is something you don't want to do and someone is being pushy, back out gracefully. ★★★

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Your con-cern and sincerity will help you gain respect and support. By helping others, you will bring about your own success. Someone who has helped you in the past will be willing to do so again. ★★★

Birthday Baby: You are charming, open, recep-tive to new ideas and lifestyles and popular with your peers. You are creative and charismatic, ag-gressive and forward thinking.

Eugenia's Web sites: astroadvice.com for fun, eugenialast.com for confidential consultations

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12			13				14			
15			16				17			
18			19				20			
		21			22					
23	24	25			26		27	28	29	
30				31			32			
33			34				35			
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38	39	40			41		42	43	44	
45				46			47			
48				49			50			
51				52			53			

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5951 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

		9		3	2	4	1			
							9	7	5	
		5		9					2	
								2		
1										6
	3									
7				4		2				
5	1	6								
	8	2	6	7		5				

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 3/21

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

1	8	7	4	5	9	2	3	6
5	6	4	8	3	2	9	7	1
3	2	9	7	6	1	8	5	4
8	3	6	9	2	4	7	1	5
9	1	5	6	7	3	4	8	2
4	7	2	1	8	5	6	9	3
7	5	3	2	4	8	1	6	9
2	9	8	5	1	6	3	4	7
6	4	1	3	9	7	5	2	8

Difficulty Level ★★★★★ 3/20

WONDERWORD

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizon-tally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD. The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

DICTIONARIES Solution: 10 letters

Y T C H T E C H N I C A L D D
L R E O C R L A N G U A G E S
O A A K R E O E C N U L F S Y
O N U R C E E S S G O I L C N
H S S S B O D P N S N U I R O
C L G E I I P I S I A I N I N
S A N R O V L A T R D Y K P Y
O T I U R I R I R I N R S T M
F I N T B Y O A O D O R E I S
T O A C E N N M A C T N A V O
W N E I S G S T W O R D S E N
A S M P E L A C I D E M I I L
R O E D V E R S I O N S Z N I
E L E X I C O N U P A G E S N
L I N G U I S T I C S C O P E

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Yesterday's Answer: Roarce

We featured in our request: TREASURY #8 is the first ever Wonderword book containing only 20 x 20 puzzles, with 75 of these large puzzles. To order, send check or money order for \$10.95 each plus \$3.25 p&h (\$14.20 total each). U.S. funds only for the first volume. \$1.50 p&h for each additional volume. In Wonderword, Universal Press Syndicate, 11331 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64108 or call toll free 1-800-642-6480. Order online at updates.com.

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• 5-Liner	\$35
• 3-Liner with picture	\$45
• 5-Liner with picture	\$55

Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:

- *Saipan Tribune*: All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met.
No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

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Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.

ONES NOSE

Find today's solution in this section

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235- NEWS

W. Kentucky beats Illinois, 76-72



PORTLAND, Ore. (AP)—Whether they were relieved, tired or expecting it all along, the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers didn't wildly celebrate their latest NCAA tournament upset. A.J. Slaughter was the most demonstrative, pumping his fist a few times after 12th-seeded Western Kentucky held off a late charge to beat fifth-seeded Illinois 76-72 on Thursday night in the South Regional.

"I just kind of had a sigh of relief when it ended, because we made it closer than it should have been," Slaughter said.

But when asked if he was surprised to be moving on, Slaughter shook his head and laughed. The Hilltoppers grabbed attention in the tournament last season with an unexpected run to the second weekend.

"Nah," he said.

Steffphon Pettigrew had 17 points to lead Western Kentucky (25-8), which led by as many as 17 points. It was the 19th time in the last 21 years that a 12 seed has beaten a No. 5.

Trent Meacham had a season-high 24 points for the Illini, who were without senior defensive specialist Chester Frazier, who had surgery on his right hand last week.

"Chester has been our leader and the heart of our team all year," Meacham said. "It's tough when you don't have him especially because he played the most minutes for us all year. When you play an entire season with someone like that, he's our iron-man, our leader and we never had to go without him. It was a big blow for us."

Western Kentucky will face Gonzaga (27-5) in a second round on Saturday.

The Hilltoppers looked as if they would cruise to this upset, but Illinois turned it into a one-possession game in the final minute.

Calvin Brock's layup for the Illini made it 71-66 with 1:11 to go. Orlando Mendez-Valdez missed a long-jumper for Western Kentucky, and Anthony Salley was called for goaltending on Jeff Jordan's fast-break layup to make it 71-68.

Pettigrew made a pair of free throws before Meacham scored on a baseline drive to narrow it to 73-70.

Slaughter hit one of two foul shots to give Western Kentucky a slight cushion, but Meacham's layup made it 74-72. Illinois tried to foul immediately, but didn't get the call in time and Anthony Salley hit free throws with 0.9 seconds on the clock.

When the buzzer sounded, there was no jumping or yelling. Just Slaughter's fist pumps.

"We expect this of ourselves now—to play a team like Illinois and win," he said.

Coach Ken McDonald speculated his team was tired. Forward Sergio Kerusch suggested shock.

"It was exciting, but we were scared

for a minute," he said. "It was such a nail-biter at the end."

Memphis 80, Cal State-Northridge 70

At Kansas City, Mo., after overcoming heartbreak and tragedy just to get to the NCAA tournament, the Matadors of Cal State-Northridge could not get past the greatest game of Roburt Sallie's life.

Sallie, averaging 4.5 points all year for Memphis, scored 35 and the second-seeded Tigers beat the plucky Matadors 81-70 Thursday, dodging what would have been one of the biggest upsets in tournament history.

Connecticut 103, Chattanooga 47

At Philadelphia, with their coach in the hospital, A.J. Price and Hasheem Thabeet scored 20 points apiece to lead top-seeded Connecticut to its first post-season win in three years.

UConn coach Jim Calhoun missed the game because he wasn't feeling well and was hospitalized for tests. He will be kept overnight for observation.

Associate head coach George Blaney coached the Huskies (28-4) in Calhoun's absence. Stanley Robinson topped the Huskies with 24 points. They'll meet Texas A&M in Saturday's second-round game of the West Regional of the NCAA tournament.

Texas A&M 79, BYU 66

At Philadelphia, Bryan Davis scored 21, Donald Sloan had 14 and the ninth-seeded Aggies handed the Cougars their seventh straight opening-round loss in a rematch from last year. Both teams drew the same seeds last March when A&M won 67-62.

The Aggies (24-9) will meet No. 1 seed Connecticut on Saturday.

Jimmer Fredette scored 18 and Lee Cumard added 17 for BYU (25-8).

Purdue 61, Northern Iowa 56

At Portland, Ore., E'Twaun Moore had 17 points and fifth-seeded Purdue held off a late charge to advance.

JaJuan Johnson added 14 points for the Boilermakers (26-9), who led by as many as 14 in the West Regional at the Rose Garden Arena before the Panthers made it interesting down the stretch.

Kwadzo Ahelegbe had 11 points for Northern Iowa (23-11), which closed to within 56-54 on Kerwin Dunham's 3-pointer with 17.4 seconds left.

Maryland 84, California 71

At Kansas City, Mo., Grievus Vasquez had 27 points and Maryland shut down the nation's best 3-point shooting team.

Tenth-seeded Maryland (21-13) disrupted Cal with its pressure defense, rarely giving the Bears a good look from the perimeter. Vasquez controlled the offense and Dave Neal chipped in



Western Kentucky forward Steffphon Pettigrew, right, shoots over Illinois' Dominique Keller, left, as Calvin Brock watches during the second half of their game in the first round of the men's NCAA college basketball tournament in Portland, Ore., Thursday, March 19, 2009.

15 points, helping the Terps advance past the first round in their ninth straight NCAA appearance.

Maryland will face No. 2 seed Memphis on Saturday.

Washington 71, Mississippi State 58

At Portland, Ore., Quincy Pondexter scored a season-high 23 points and fourth-seeded Washington took advantage of early foul trouble to Mississippi State's menacing Jarvis Varnado.

Jon Brockman had 14 rebounds and 10 points for the Huskies (26-8), who looked far better than the last time they played in this city, losing to Portland of the West Coast Conference to begin the season.

SOUTH REGIONAL North Carolina 101, Radford 58

At Greensboro, N.C., Tyler Hansbrough took quick care of his latest record pursuit, then helped North Carolina advance in the NCAA tournament without one of its star playmakers.

Hansbrough set the Atlantic Coast Conference career scoring mark in the opening minutes and finished with 22 points South Regional's top seed another easy tournament opener in its home state.

Wayne Ellington had 25 points for the Tar Heels (29-4), who led the en-

tire way and had no trouble beating the 16th-seeded Highlanders even with point guard Ty Lawson, who missed his third straight game with a toe injury.

LSU 75, Butler 71

At Greensboro, N.C., Butler has put together quite a few upsets in recent NCAA tournaments. Marcus Thornton scored 30 points to keep LSU off that list.

Tasmin Mitchell had 14 points and Chris Johnson added 12 for the Tigers (27-7), seeded eighth in the South Regional. They shot 49 percent against one of the nation's toughest defenses in advancing to Saturday's second round against the North Carolina-Radford winner.

Michigan 62, Clemson 59

At Kansas City, Mo., Manny Harris scored 21 points and Michigan stymied Clemson with its 1-3-1 defense, then survived a late scare in its first NCAA tournament game in 11 years.

The Wolverines (21-13) showed little sign of nerves in their first NCAA game since a booster scandal rocked the program in the 1990s, handling—for the most part—Clemson's frenetic press to move onto the second round.

Oklahoma 82, Morgan State 54

At Kansas City, Mo., a dominant Blake Griffin had 28 points and 13 rebounds

and survived an ugly fall that got another player ejected as Oklahoma rolled.

Griffin missed most of two games because of a concussion he sustained on Feb. 21. The second-seeded Sooners (28-5) lost those two games and four of their last six before stumbling into the NCAA tournament and .

Gonzaga 77, Akron 64

At Portland, Ore., Josh Heytvelt scored 22 points—seven during a decisive late run—and the Bulldogs rallied to get past determined but ultimately overwhelmed Akron.

Micah Downs added 15 points for fourth-seeded Gonzaga (27-5), which won for the 19th time in 20 games. The Zags are in their 11th consecutive NCAA tournament, but had lost in the first round of the last two.

EAST REGIONAL Texas 76, Minnesota 62

At Greensboro, N.C., A.J. Abrams hit eight 3-pointers and scored 26 points to help Texas win its NCAA opener for the fifth time in six seasons.

Damion James added 18 points and nine rebounds for the seventh-seeded Longhorns (23-11).

Duke 86, Binghamton 62

At Greensboro, Jon Scheyer scored 15 points to lead six players in double figures, and the Blue Devils made Binghamton's first appearance in the NCAA tournament a quick one.

Lance Thomas added 14 points and Gerald Henderson and Nolan Smith added 13 apiece for the Blue Devils (29-6), the No. 2 seed. They shot 49 percent, put the game away with a huge run to open the second half and advanced to a second-round matchup with seventh-seeded Texas on Saturday.

Villanova 80, American 67

At Philadelphia, Dwayne Anderson and Dante Cunningham each scored 25 points, and Villanova rallied back from a 14-point hole.

The third-seeded Wildcats (27-7) lost their home-court advantage and nearly lost the game, needing a late 19-2 run in the East Regional to fend off the Patriot League champions.

UCLA 65, VCU 64

At Philadelphia, Darren Collison pressured VCU's Eric Maynor into missed 17-foot jumper at the buzzer and the sixth-seeded Bruins held on to beat the Rams.

Josh Shipp scored 16, Jrue Holiday had 13 and three other Bruins (26-8) scored in double figures.

Maynor led Virginia Commonwealth with 21 points. The Rams (24-10) from the Colonial Athletic Association were a popular pick to pull off a 6-11 upset against the Pac-10 powerhouse—even President Barack Obama circled VCU in his bracket.

Browns' Stallworth reportedly drunk in fatal crash



MIAMI (AP)—Cleveland Browns wide receiver Donte Stallworth was driving drunk when he struck and killed a pedestrian, according to published and broadcast reports Thursday. WSVN-TV reported Thursday that unnamed sources with knowledge of the investi-

gation said Stallworth's blood-alcohol level was between .08 and .16. The legal limit is .08. The Miami Herald also cited an unnamed source as saying that Stallworth's blood-alcohol level was above the legal limit.

The Miami Beach Police Department refused to confirm the reports. Ed Griffith, spokesman for Miami-Dade

County prosecutor Katherine Fernandez Rundle, would say only that the investigation is focusing on whether alcohol was a factor in the death of 59-year-old Mario Reyes.

Reyes was struck and killed by a Bentley driven by Stallworth about 7 a.m. Saturday morning. Reyes, a crane operator, had just gotten off

work and was trying to catch a bus when he was hit.

No charges have been filed against Stallworth, 28. His agent, Drew Rosenhaus, nor his attorney, Robert Switke, returned calls from The Associated Press seeking comment. Stallworth issued a statement Wednesday saying he was "grief-stricken" over Reyes' death.

If Stallworth was drunk, he could be charged with DUI manslaughter which carries a maximum 15-year prison sentence.

Stallworth signed a seven-year, \$35 million contract with the Browns as a free agent before last season but was injured much of the year. He previously played for New England, Philadelphia and New Orleans in the NFL and played college football at Tennessee.

Japan beats South Korea 6-2, will face Team USA

SAN DIEGO (AP)—The World Baseball Classic is heading to Hollywood, and what could be more marquee than Daisuke Matsuzaka against Jake Peavy at Dodger Stadium?

That's the expected pitching matchup for the second semifinal Sunday night in Los Angeles, when defending WBC champion Japan will face hobbled Team USA.

Japan earned that matchup—and an extra day of rest—by rallying for three runs in the eighth inning Thursday night to beat South Korea 6-2 and win Pool 1. Japan and South Korea had already clinched semifinal berths.

Korea, held to six hits by seven Japanese pitchers, will play Pool 2 winner Venezuela in the first semifinal on Saturday night.

Although the Japanese haven't announced Dice-K as the starter, it's his turn in the rotation and he hasn't pitched since throwing six brilliant innings in a 6-0 win against Cuba on Sunday. The Boston Red Sox ace is 5-0 in five appearances during two WBCs. He's 2-0 this year after going 3-0 in leading Japan to the inaugural WBC championship in 2006, when he was named tournament MVP.

Peavy, the San Diego Padres ace who won the 2007 NL Cy Young Award, is scheduled to start for the Americans, who reached the semis with a dramatic 6-5 win over Puerto Rico on Tuesday night.

With the score tied at 2 in the eighth, Japanese manager Tatsunori Hara pinch-hit for his Nos. 4 and 5 hitters, a move that paid off with consecutive singles that keyed a three-run rally.

No. 3 hitter Norichika Aoki reached with a leadoff bunt single against Oh Seung-hwan (0-1) and Atsunori Inaba singled to right-center while pinch-hitting for Kenji Johjima of the Seattle Mariners, giving the Japanese runners on first and third with no outs.

South Korea's Kim Kwang-hyun came on to face lefty pinch-hitter Michihiro Ogasawara, who singled past second baseman Jeong Keun-woo to bring in Aoki with the go-ahead run. Yoshiyuki Kamei sacrificed and Akinori Iwamura singled in Inaba. Ogasawara came around to score on an error by center fielder Lee Taek-Keun, his second of the game.

Ichiro Suzuki doubled and scored on Aoki's single in the ninth. He heads into the semis hitting just .212 (7-for-33).



Japan second baseman Akinori Iwamura reacts after completing a double play against South Korea to end a threat in the seventh inning of a World Baseball Classic game at PETCO Park in San Diego on Thursday, March 19, 2009.

Japan took a 2-1 lead in the second inning on a home run by Seiichi Uchikawa and an RBI single by Yasuyuki Kataoka. Uchikawa's home run landed near a large Japanese flag hanging on a railing on the balcony on the second level of the Western Metal Supply Co. brick warehouse just beyond the left-field corner.

That lead held up until South Korea's Lee Bum-ho homered over the 396-foot sign in straightaway center field leading off the seventh inning off reliever Masahiro Tanaka.

South Korea had taken a 1-0 lead on Kim Hyun-soo's RBI double in the first inning.

Reliever Hideki Wakui (1-0) earned the win by striking out the only batter he faced to end the seventh. Starter Tetsuya Utsumi allowed one run and three hits in 2 2-3 innings.

South Korean starter Jang Won-sam went three innings, allowing one earned run and five hits.

South Korea's Lee Young-kyu was hit in the back of the helmet by a pitch from Utsumi in the third inning and collapsed in pain. After several minutes on the ground, he got up and was able to walk off the field.

The crowd of 14,832 at 42,000-seat Petco Park chanted and pounded Thunder Stix.

Furyk takes his first lead in nearly 20 months

PALM HARBOR, Fla. (AP)—After a late start to the year, Jim Furyk might be getting up to speed.

Furyk made two long birdie putts and was equally thrilled with a 10-foot par save on his final hole Thursday, which gave him a 6-under 65 in the Transitions Championship. It was the first time he has held the outright lead since his last PGA Tour victory 20 months ago.

"Something I can try to build on," Furyk said.

Stephen Ames was one shot behind after a 66 on a Copperhead Course that was demanding as ever, but one he enjoys far more than the Blue Monster last week at Doral that favors the big hitters.

The group at 67 included Kenny Perry, who sandwiched birdies on the tough 16th and 18th holes around his only bogey on the round. The 48-year-old Perry is playing his eighth event of the year and is worn out. Innisbrook is not exactly a working vacation.

"It's tough out there. It's U.S. Open conditions," Perry said. "There's no breather holes out there."

Ryo Ishikawa, the 17-year-old from Japan making his second PGA Tour start, birdied his opening two holes but never got any lower and settled for a 69, leaving him in much better shape than at Riviera,

where he missed the cut.

"I was more relaxed compared with my first event," he said. "The key was the first hole."

Furyk took a five-week break to start the year. Having failed to win last season - only the third time in the last 14 years he gone an entire PGA Tour season without winning - he decided not to start until Pebble Beach. His scores have improved each week, and Furyk really hit his stride last week at Doral with four rounds in the 60s to finish third.

"I was a little nervous about being rusty," he said. "It had been a long time since I played. I seemed to get back into the flow quickly."

The bigger problem has been getting back to winning.

His last victory was at the end of July in 2007 at the Canadian Open. Stranger still is that Furyk, who has 13 career victories, has not been atop the leaderboard after any round since then.

He hasn't been played poorly. His putter has been the culprit, the case with so many other players, and the few times he did give himself a chance in the final round, he simply didn't hole enough putts.

"The reality is, I didn't win. That's what everyone emphasizes, and I understand why," he said.

But he worked hard on his aim with the short stick, and is gaining confidence. Furyk didn't need much help when he started his round on the back nine, making all his birdies from short range.

Then came a sweeping, 35-foot birdie putt that dropped for a 31 to open the tournament, and he birdied the next two holes to separate himself from the early starters. The only bogey came on a poor bunker shot on the par-3 eighth, and Furyk was fortunate not to drop another shot at the end.

The Transitions Championship often gets forgotten in the Florida Swing because it falls between a World Golf Championship and the Arnold Palmer Invitational next week, but players were reminded again that Innisbrook is a gem.

Along with its natural characteristics—gentle changes in elevation, winding tree-lined fairways rarely found in these parts—the greens became more firm as a warm sun baked out the Copperhead Course.

Furyk and Ames were among the early starters. Equally impressive was the play of some guys in the afternoon, starting with Perry.

"It's so hard to make birdies on this golf course," Perry said.

Furyk wasn't the only player who might have taken some mo-

mentum with him from Miami.

Masters champion Trevor Immelman has struggled mightily since his month break after Abu Dhabi, and he might have been forcing it with his defense of a green jacket approaching. Somewhere between the range and the golf course, he lost confidence in his swing. But he had a 72-69 weekend at Doral, played nicely at the Tavistock Cup, and his 68 in the first round was his lowest score of the year.

"It was nice to play like myself again for a change," Immelman said. "I started feeling a little bit better the last 10 days or so. It was nice to actually go out there and do it on the golf course."

The large group at 68 included David Toms, coming off a two-week break and starting his three-week bid to get into the Masters. Toms is at No. 66 in the world ranking and needs to get inside the top 50 after Bay Hill next week. That might require a third-place finish, and Toms certainly had few complaints with a bogey-free round.

The longest par putt he faced all day was from 4 feet on his last hole, and getting around Innisbrook without too much stress is rare.

"It's a lot like major championships out here," Toms said. "You've got to play your way around, and sometimes you can't go at certain pins. There's just not a ton of birdies out there."

James leads Cavs past Blazers in OT

CLEVELAND (AP)—LeBron James had 26 points, 11 rebounds and 10 assists for his 24th career triple-double, leading the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 97-92 overtime win over the Portland Trail Blazers on Thursday night.

Cleveland committed only two turnovers, tying an NBA record, while setting a franchise record and marking the lowest total in the NBA this season.

James scored six points in the overtime period, with his driving basket in the lane after the Cavaliers won the jumpball putting them ahead for good. Zydrunas Ilgauskas added a free throw and a basket, giving the Cavaliers a 91-86 lead with 3:15 left. James hit two more baskets as the Cavaliers outscored Portland 11-6 in the extra session.

Brandon Roy led the Trail Blazers with 24 points.

Hawks 95, Mavericks 87

At Atlanta, Joe Johnson scored 24 points, and reserve Flip Murray had 19 as the Atlanta Hawks got their seventh straight win.

The Hawks moved four games ahead of fifth-place Miami in the Eastern Conference standings.

Dallas, which has lost three of four to drop 1 1/2 behind seventh-place Utah in the Western Conference, but the Mavericks are still 3 1/2 ahead of Phoenix for the eighth and final playoff spot.

Dirk Nowitzki scored 23 points and 12 rebounds for Dallas, which was without two starters, swingman Josh Howard, who has a sore left ankle, and forward Erick Dampier, who has a swollen left knee and missed his first game of the season.



Lakers 114, Warriors 106

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant and Pau Gasol each scored 21 points, and Los Angeles held off Golden State.

The victory, was the Lakers' 31st at home, eclipsing last season's total, and kept them a full game behind Cleveland for the NBA's best record and homecourt advantage throughout the playoffs with 14 games remaining. The Cavaliers beat Portland 97-92 in overtime.

Monta Ellis scored 27 points and Kellenna Azubuike added 25 for the Warriors, who have lost 19 of their last 22 meetings with the Lakers and are 2-18 at Staples Center since the arena opened in 1999.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
y-Boston	51	18	.739	—
Philadelphia	34	32	.515	15 1/2
New Jersey	29	39	.426	21 1/2
New York	28	39	.418	22
Toronto	24	44	.353	26 1/2

Central Division

y-Cleveland	55	13	.809	—
Detroit	33	34	.493	21 1/2
Chicago	32	37	.464	23 1/2
Milwaukee	31	39	.443	25
Indiana	28	41	.406	27

Southeast Division

x-Orlando	50	18	.735	—
Atlanta	41	28	.594	9 1/2
Miami	36	31	.537	13 1/2
Charlotte	30	38	.441	20
Washington	16	53	.232	34 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

San Antonio	45	22	.672	—
Houston	45	25	.643	1 1/2
New Orleans	42	25	.627	3
Dallas	41	28	.594	5
Memphis	17	50	.254	28

Northwest Division

Denver	44	25	.638	—
Portland	43	26	.623	1
Utah	42	26	.618	1 1/2
Minnesota	20	48	.294	23 1/2
Oklahoma City	19	49	.279	24 1/2

Pacific Division

y-LA Lakers	53	14	.791	—
Phoenix	37	31	.544	16 1/2
Golden State	24	43	.358	29
LA Clippers	17	51	.250	36 1/2
Sacramento	14	54	.206	39 1/2

Yesterday's Games

Cleveland 97, Portland 92
Atlanta 95, Dallas 87
LA Lakers 114, Golden State 106

TRANSITIONS
CHAMPIONSHIP SCORES

FIRST ROUND

Jim Furyk	65
Stephen Ames	66
Kenny Perry	67
Mathew Goggin	67
Jonathan Byrd	67
David Toms	68
Trevor Immelman	68
Tom Lehman	68
Charlie Wi	68
D.J. Trahan	68
Mark Wilson	68
Ben Crane	68
Nathan Green	68
Brendon de Jonge	68
J.J. Henry	69
Troy Matteson	69
Steve Elkington	69
Nick O'Hern	69
Richard S. Johnson	69
Steve Stricker	69
Retief Goosen	69
Nick Watney	69
Bob Estes	69
Scott McCarron	69
Cameron Beckman	69
Mark Calcavecchia	69
Kevin Sutherland	69
Woody Austin	69
Michael Letzig	69
John Mallinger	69
Jeff Overton	69
Ryo Ishikawa	69
Tom Pernice Jr.	70
Alvaro Quiros	70
Ryan Palmer	70
Will MacKenzie	70
Briny Baird	70
Steve Marino	70
Matt Bettencourt	70
Kevin Na	70
Spencer Levin	70
Ryan Moore	70
John Huston	70
K.J. Choi	70
Stuart Appleby	70
Steve Lowery	70
Chris Couch	70
Tim Herron	70
Bill Lunde	70
Eric Axley	71

Rich Beem	71
Bo Van Pelt	71
Charles Howell III	71
Brian Gay	71
J.B. Holmes	71
Joe Ogilvie	71
Steve Flesch	71
Todd Hamilton	71
Harrison Frazar	71
Jason Dufner	71
Brad Adamonis	71
Lucas Glover	71
J.P. Hayes	71
Lee Janzen	71
Heath Slocum	71
Brian Davis	71
Ken Duke	71
Rory Sabbatini	71
Johnson Wagner	71
Boo Weekley	71
Nicholas Thompson	71
Jeff Klauk	71
Marc Leishman	71
David Mathis	71
Bart Bryant	72
Billy Mayfair	72
David Duval	72
Paul Goydos	72
Greg Kraft	72
Matt Kuchar	72
Paul Azinger	72
Dean Wilson	72
Bob Heintz	72
Jason Day	72
Rod Pampling	72
Billy Andrade	72
Robert Garrigus	72
Corey Pavin	72
Ryuji Imada	72
Sean O'Hair	72
Jimmy Walker	72
George McNeill	72
Kevin Streelman	72
Greg Chalmers	72
Tim Clark	72
Rocco Mediate	72
Stephen Gangloff	72
Jarrod Lyle	72
Bubba Watson	73
Joe Durant	73
Jonathan Kaye	73
Cliff Kresge	73
Tommy Armour III	73
Brett Quigley	73
D.A. Points	73
Dudley Hart	73
Carl Pettersson	73
Kirk Triplett	73
Bill Haas	73
Ted Purdy	73
Scott Piercy	73
Peter Lonard	74
Charley Hoffman	74
Zach Johnson	74
Chris DiMarco	74
Glen Day	74
Jeff Maggert	74
Jason Bohn	74
Aron Price	74
John Senden	74
Kent Jones	74
Stephen Leaney	74
Adam Scott	74
Brad Faxon	74
Parker McLachlin	74
Marc Turnesa	74
Shaun Micheel	74
Olin Browne	74
Greg Owen	75
Chad Campbell	75
James Nitties	75
Steve LeBrun	75
Peter Tomasulo	75
Brian Bateman	75
Y.E. Yang	76
Derek Fathauer	76
Brandt Snedeker	77
Webb Simpson	77
Vaughn Taylor	77
Tim Petrovic	78
Scott Sterling	78
Alex Cejka	79
Clint Avret	82
Fred Funk	78
(withdraw)	

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BIG LEAGUE STANDINGS

Falcons	3	1
OIAces	2	1
Aztecs	2	2
D-9ers	2	2
Hustlers	1	2
IT&E	3	1

ORTIZ

From Page 28

place, Jun Calma at seventh, and Orly De Leon at ninth.

Fr. Many Corcuera and Rich Meimban tied with net scores of 77, good for 10th and 11th, respectively.

Jay Gatdula, a co-worker of Ortiz at MCC, came in at 18th place with a dismal net of 82.

Another player who couldn't get his rhythm going was Rey Ferraz, who managed an 81 for 16th spot.

The 16-handicapper carded a gross of 97, which was higher the net 72 he posted last month. Rounding out the finishers were Rene Batallones (78), Mando Guban (79), John Matsumoto (79), Jess Yumul (79), Jojo Geva (82), Manny Po (85), and Fred Cataluna (86).

Sons of the Beaches rule Kids' Marianas Cup

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

Jeon Doemin, Angelo Salas, A.J. Batallones, Minung Kim, Lauren Hofschneider, and Michael Moran were just few of the 100 youngsters who signed up for the Kids' Marianas Cup.

With ages 10-15 years old, together they formed as a team, which they called Sons of the Beaches that not only became a household name during the one-day tournament on March 15, but also emerged as the champion by sweeping its games in the championship match.

The team, which was handled by Rep. Ed Salas (head coach) and Bethanle Battalones, defeated eventual runner-up Lamers twice in the best-of-three final series.

Sons of the Beaches won Game 1, 15-13, and Game 2, 15-9, to take home title and the prizes that went with it including medals, courtesy of Topnotch, cell phones, 100 text pre-paid cards from IT&E, and personally autographed volleyballs from Phil Dalhausser.

The kids' tournament concluded the successful staging of the 17th Marianas Cup Beach Volleyball Festival at its permanent home, the Pacific Islands Club.

It was organized by the Northern Mariana Island Volleyball Association with the help of the professional players led by Dalhausser and three-time Marianas Cup champion Paul Baxter.

The total 20 teams went through the double-elimination format (best-of-three).

All entrants received two-drink coupons for Pepsi, Gatorade, or Aquafina courtesy of Pacific Trading Co., waterpark entrance for the day courtesy of PIC, and T-shirts designed by local student artist Kai Staal with the help of Island Apparel.

Every team that played received their choice of 100-text pre-paid cards from IT&E or an hour-long coupon to MegaZone. "Everyone is a winner," said NMIVA president Laurie Peterka.

The Lamers, which settled for second, was composed of Kei

Yoshida, Kono Remeliik, Michi Yoshida, Emma McCullough-Stearns, Jessica Soll, and coached by Amy F. and Hee Jin.

The team battled 17 total games coming out of the losers bracket, defeating Fluffy Pink Bunnies in three games. They won medals courtesy of Top Notch, PIC waterpark passes for two, personally autographed volleyballs from Dalhausser courtesy of NMIVA and 100-text pre-paid cards from IT&E.

Fluffy Pink Bunnies, anchored by Jeane Brackner, Christian Miller, Amy Xhe, Josh Beeno, and Angelo Jones, and handled by Brian N. Hom, scored an upset over Lamat Pwi Pwi in a three-game match.

They also won medals from Top Notch, PIC waterpark passes for two, movie passes courtesy of NMIVA and IT&E 100-text pre-paid cards from IT&E.

Lamat Pwi Pwi finished fourth. The team was composed of Utalap Billy, P.M. Mailo, Andy John Hambrose, T-Nanson Cholymay, and Flo-

rita Snyder Billy and coached by Owen Cholymay. They went home with backpacks from Ladera International School and IT&E 100-text pre-paid cards from IT&E.

NMIVA also recognized two individual players for their sterling performance.

Rodney Sacramento of the Rocket Powers was adjudged as the most inspiring player for the boys category and Small Stars' Negahr Rastguiry for the girls for her crisp serves. She won a 17th Annual Marianas Cup T-shirt

High school students from Marianas High School and Saipan Southern High School volunteered as referees and supplement coaches.

NMIVA thanked Marianas Islands Insurance Association for their generous donation of \$500 to help kick off what ISK8 hopes to be a year-long effort at attacking the graffiti problem on Saipan.

The next project that ISK8 hopes to accomplish is to help the Saipan Mayor's Office with the Japanese Cultural Center across the street from the skate park.



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Sons of the Beaches won the 2009 Kids' Marianas Cup last Sunday at the Pacific Islands Club sand court.

KFC/TACO

From Page 28

effort, making 20 markers.

KFC/Taco Bell will aim for a finals seat next week when it faces the winner of the Dollar

Days- IT&E. playoff match.

First Game

KFC/Taco Bell 99 – Cadagat 19, Capalad 12, Lerio 11, Palero 11, Concepcion 9, Mendez 9, Itaas 7, Itibus 6, Hugos 4, Alcantara 4.

IT&E

From Page 28

came home on a Nathan Castro single with one out in the bottom fourth.

Tenorio made his second run

of the night on another Camacho single to tie the game at 3-3.

IT&E broke the tie in the sixth with two runs from Jose Villagomez and Kevin Santos, who both scored the final two runs for the team in the top of the seventh inning.

MARCH

From Page 28

bowlers will be limited to the first 60 entries for each day.

Cash prizes will depend on

the number of entries.

Women players are reminded that there will be separate prizes for them in the event that there are 10 or more entries.

Bowlers aged 12-18 years old can only come to play on Sun-

day for the Prince and Princess of the Lanes.

Youth bowlers must pay \$10 entry fee.

Non-SBA members under the youth category must also pay a membership fee of \$10 if

With no out in the bottom of the seventh, Ton Castro managed to reach home plate on Tenorio's fourth hit of the night but two of the D-9ers' last four batters were retired on strikeouts by IT&E reliever Elton Santos.

27, N. Mateo 20, Arreza 15, Joyner 12, G. Masga 6, De Vero 4, Fernandez 4, U. Mateo 4.

Docomo 92 – R. Sanciangco 48, Diaz 12, Miranda 10, Lee 10, Chan 2, Hamoy 2.

Scoring by quarters: 30-all, 50-all, 74-73, 104-92.

It was the second loss in four matches for the D-9ers, who will take on the Hustlers in their next game on Tuesday.

The Fielders, who are at the cellar with a 1-3 record, will take on the Hustlers (1-2) in their next game.

they wish to qualify for the annual roll-off.

For registration, interested players may contact Gigi or Ross Zapanta at 288-5627 or email zapanta@pticom.com. (Nazario Rodriguez Jr.)



Japan beats South Korea 6-2, will face Team USA

The World Baseball Classic is heading to Hollywood, and what could be more marquee than Daisuke Matsuzaka against Jake Peavy at Dodger Stadium?

26

Saipan Tribune Sports

W. Kentucky beats Illinois, 76-72

Whether they were relieved, tired or expecting it all along, the Western Kentucky Hilltoppers didn't wildly celebrate their latest NCAA tournament upset.

25



28 SATURDAY, MARCH 21, 2009

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

KFC/Taco Bell, Athlete's Foot in semis

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Athlete's Foot and KFC/Taco Bell booked the first two semifinal tickets in the 2009 Navy Hill Friendship Basketball League following their separate wins Thursday night at the Gaparan Basketball Court.

The sixth-seeded Athlete's Foot stunned the second-ranked Docomo in the second game, 104-92.

Docomo played in the playoffs sans gunner Ponce Rasa, leaving Ryan Sanciangco to carry most of the load the team. Worse, big man James Lee fouled out in the opening minutes of the fourth period when Docomo was making a comeback.

In contrast, Athlete's Foot had a balance offense and the luxury of shuffling its players en route to a 12-point win.

The game was tied after the first period and at halftime, and was still close at the end of the third period with Athlete's Foot ahead by only a hair, 74-73.

Athlete's Foot led by as much as 10 points midway in the fourth period until straight baskets from Sanciangco moved Docomo within four, 91-95, with 1:33 left on the clock.

But that was the closest that Docomo could get, as it missed a couple of layups and free throws, and committed

consecutive turnovers in the closing minutes.

Athlete's Foot sealed the win from the 15-foot line, going 5-for-8.

Elmer Esdrelon top-scored for Athlete's Foot with 27 points, while Nate Mateo added 20. Krisgel Arreza and Jawn Joyner contributed 15 and 12 markers, respectively.

Sanciangco exploded for 48 points, making 16 in the fourth quarter, which saw Docomo running out of steam, as it had only three players scoring in the playoff period.

Docomo is out of contention, while Athlete's Foot advanced to the semis and will meet the winner of the Rollers-Inchcape tiff, which will be played tonight.

In the first game KFC/Taco Bell sent MBI to the showers

via a 99-92 win in the kick off of the single-elimination play-off round.

KFC/Taco Bell had a good start behind Larry Palero's nine first quarter points to take a 28-19 lead after 10 minutes of play.

KFC/Taco Bell kept the lead, finding ways to stop MBI's repeated comeback bids.

Bonbon Cadagat finished with a team-high 19 points, while three of his teammates also contributed double figures. Mel Capalad chipped in 12, while Sonny Lerio and Palero added 11 apiece.

J.R. Barrios led MBI's losing

See KFC/TACO on Page 27



Ortiz fires lowest score, but Siruelo wins March Ace

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER

In-house player Jun Ortiz continued to take advantage of his familiarity of the Marianas Country Club as he topped the Fil-Taga Golfers Association March Ace of the Month Tournament last Sunday.

It was the second time the Marpi golf course maintenance crew finished first in the monthly tournament, but unlike February when he wound up with the championship, this time he had to yield the title to runner-up Nestor Siruelo.

Club rules stipulate that monthly winners can only win once a year and the runner-up automatically gets the plum.

Ortiz finished with a net score of 63, which was seven shots ahead of Siruelo's net 70.

While Siruelo took home the March plum, Ortiz didn't go home empty-handed as he pocketed the \$100 first-place purse for his effort on the greens.

Both players actually completed the 18-hole play with identical gross scores of 85, the second lowest of the day, but Ortiz triumphed due to a handicap of 22 compared to Siruelo's 15.

Mat Adony, a 19-handicapper, netted a 71 for third after submitting a gross score of 90.

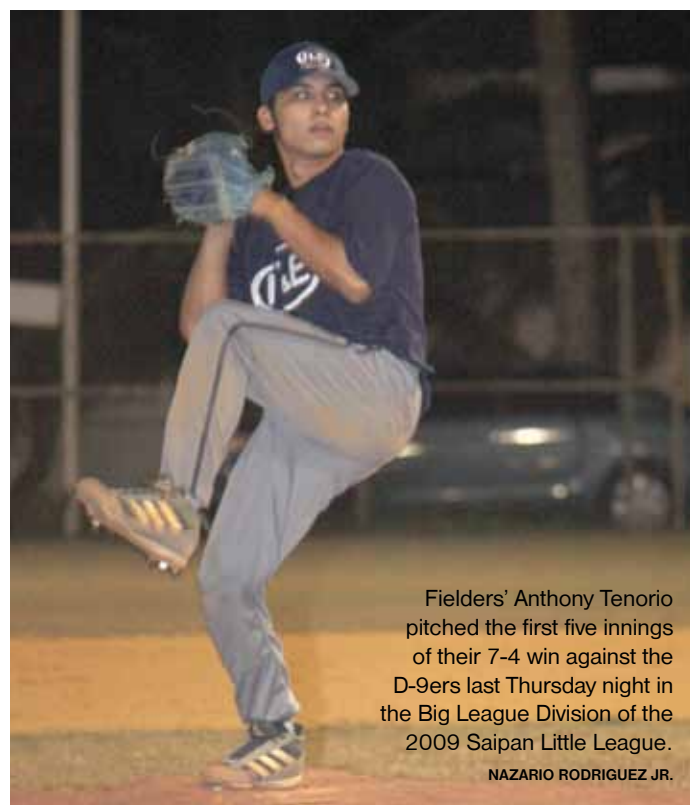
Wil Retardo, the player with the lowest handicap of six, closed out with the lowest gross of 79 but that was only good for fourth with his net of 73.

Also coming in with a 73 at fifth place was Ted Malaran as the 18-handicapper had a gross of 91.

Four players netted 75, including January Ace winner and 2008 Golfer of the Year Mike Cruz. Cruz, with a handicap of 18, made a gross score of 93 for eighth place.

Other players with a net 75 were Joe Miranda at sixth

See ORTIZ on Page 27



Fielders' Anthony Tenorio pitched the first five innings of their 7-4 win against the D-9ers last Thursday night in the Big League Division of the 2009 Saipan Little League.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.

IT&E trips D-9ers for first win in SLLB

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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REPORTER



IT&E Fielders controlled the tempo from the get-go to beat D-9ers, 7-4, and snap its three-game losing skid Thursday night in the Big League Division of the 2009 Saipan Little

League at the Francisco "Tan Ko" Palacios Ballfield.

The Fielders, who lost their first three matches this season to Ol'Aces, Aztecs, and Falcons in that order, pulled out three runs in the third inning en route to scoring the biggest upset so far in the division.

Lawrence Sablan and Ben Flores crossed home plate on a string of fielding errors, while

IT&E starting pitcher Anthony Tenorio drove Zack Tudela home on a sacrifice fly.

D-9ers started hitting in the bottom of the fourth after connecting just once with a double by E.J. Tenorio in the bottom of the first inning.

Tenorio, who went 4-for-4, scored on single by David Camacho then the latter also

See IT&E on Page 27

March King and Queen of the Lanes set

Saipan Bowling Association's 2009 March Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes and Fiji Water Prince and Princess of the Lanes will be held on March 22-23 at the Capital Bowling Center.

The March roll-off will be on Sunday starting at 4pm and at 6pm on Monday.

The tournament will be exclusively for SBA members but interested participants may play provided they will pay the annual membership fee of \$15.

Organizers said players will

have the option to bowl on Sunday or Monday or on both days but they will have to first pay the entry fee of \$15.

Based on ground rules, only the higher score will qualify for prizes.

SBA said that the number of

See MARCH on Page 27

